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Charles John Boyle



LIVES

OF

BRITISH STATESMEN.

Printed by George Ramsay & Co.

LIVES
OF
BRITISH STATESMEN.

By JOHN MACDIARMID, Esq.

**AUTHOR OF AN INQUIRY INTO THE SYSTEM OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
IN GREAT BRITAIN, AND OF AN INQUIRY INTO THE
PRINCIPLES OF SUBORDINATION.**

SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

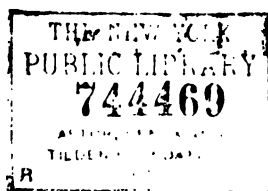
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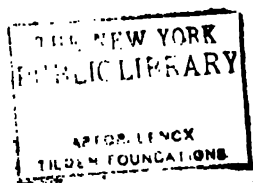
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Freeman &c.

*Warrington -
Earl of Shrofford.*

LIVES
OF
BRITISH STATESMEN.

THOMAS WENTWORTH,
EARL OF STRAFFORD.

IN delineating the character of this statesman, the biographer has to encounter difficulties superadded to the defects and obscurity of ancient records. The factions which agitated the contemporaries of Strafford, far from ceasing with the existing generation, divided posterity into his immoderate censurers, or unqualified admirers; and writers, whether hostile or friendly, have confounded his merits and defects with those of the transactions in which he was engaged. Even in the present day, an undisguised exposure of his virtues and vices might be misconstrued by many into a prejudiced panegyric, or an invidious censure of the man, as well

as of the cause. But it ought to be recollected that errors of judgment are distinct from depravity of moral principle ; that the vicious may often, from selfish motives, be led to range themselves under sanctified banners ; and that the virtuous, misled by false views, may temporarily participate in pernicious transactions. And if the partisans of either side are still too warm to prefer the discovery of truth to the assertion of their favourite opinions, let them at least be swayed by the consideration, that all characters in real life are mixed ; and that transcendant virtues without blemish, or an unvaried series of aggravated vices, are alike received with incredulity.

Parentage.

Thomas Wentworth derived from his birth all the advantages which an English commoner can enjoy. His father, Sir William, who continued to hold the manor of Wentworth, the residence of his ancestors before the Conquest, enjoyed one of the largest estates in Yorkshire ; and being also connected, by intermarriages, with some of the most considerable families in the county, possessed very extensive influence.* Thomas, the eldest of twelve children, was born on the 13th of April 1593, in Chancery Lane, at the house of his maternal grandfather, a barrister of Lincoln's-Inn. †

* Strafford's Letters and Dispatches, dedication.

† Radcliffe's Essay towards the Life of Strafford, published at the conclusion of Strafford's Letters and Dispatches. Folio edit. 1739;

Being destined to inherit the honours and estate of the family, he was early initiated in the accomplishments suitable to his rank ; and completed his literary education at St John's College, Cambridge. Education. At Cambridge. Of the plan or progress of his early studies, no particulars have been preserved. The writers of his memoirs, impressed chiefly by the striking transactions in which he was afterwards engaged, have too much neglected the circumstances by which his character was formed, and his early disposition developed.

His proficiency at the university seems, however, to have impressed his friends with a favourable opinion of his talents ; * and the strong predilection, which he afterwards retained for this seat of learning, proves that neither were his studies unacceptable to him, nor his manners and application unapplauded by his teachers. At a future period of his life, we find him patronising the cause of his university with much earnestness, and receiving their acknowledgments of his exertions. Having occasion to represent some misconduct of a church dignitary who had been educated at Oxford, he could not help adding that such a divine was never produced at Cambridge.†

From the university, Wentworth travelled abroad Travels. 1610.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 1.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 189.

to complete his education, and spent upwards of a year in France. Here he had an opportunity of witnessing the dangerous revolutions of an arbitrary government; Henry IV., the best of princes, assassinated by a fanatic; Sully, the most virtuous of ministers, disgraced by the intrigues of a court; another daughter of Medicis at the head of the French councils; and the wounds which civil discord had inflicted, and political wisdom begun to heal, reopened by the follies and crimes of new rulers. During his residence abroad, Wentworth had the advantage of being attended by a travelling tutor, distinguished equally for his learning and his knowledge of the world. It is to the honour of both, that the friendship which they contracted was warm and permanent. So deeply impressed was Wentworth with the judgment and fidelity of his tutor, that, while he could retain him in his family, he uniformly consulted him in all matters of importance; * and when Mr Greenwood at length retired to the living, with which he had been provided by his pupil, the latter continued the same expressions of confidence and regard. Many years afterwards, we find Wentworth recommending to his nephews, who were also his wards, the counsels of Mr Greenwood, as their most infallible guides; † and from this faithful friend he himself also found

* Radcliffe's Essay.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 170.

the most essential assistance in his private affairs, when his own attention became engrossed with the business of government. At the conclusion of a very long letter relative to some domestic concerns, he apologises to Mr. Greenwood: "I crave," says he, "that the necessity my affairs are in may plead my excuse for this unmannerly troubling of you; and that, out of your charity, you would not deny your help to him that, upon a good occasion, would not deny his life to you." *

The energy of this expression corresponded to Disposition. the warmth of Wentworth's feelings. The characteristic ardour of his affections began to be early remarked; and he proved no less decided in the prosecution of his enmities. Habituated to the indulgence of a plentiful fortune, and unaccustomed to opposition, he was choleric in the extreme, and the sudden violence of his resentment was apt to transport him beyond all bounds of discretion. Yet this fault was in a great measure atoned for by the manliness and candour with which it was acknowledged. When his friends, who perceived how detrimental it must prove to his future welfare, admonished him of it, their remonstrances were always taken in good part. He endeavoured to watch more diligently his infirmity, and felt his attachment increase towards those who advised him

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 488.

with sincerity and freedom. Sir George Radcliffe, the most intimate of his friends, informs us, that he never gained more on his trust and affection than when he told him of his weaknesses. *

At Court.
1613.
Knighted.

On his return from abroad, Wentworth appeared at court, and was knighted by King James. In the reign of Henry VIII., and still more of Elizabeth, this distinction would have been a proof of merit, or of some claim to the favour of the sovereign; but their less wise, and more needy successor, employed his power of dispensing honours as a means of pecuniary supply.

Marriage
and suc-
cession.

1614.

About this time Wentworth married Margaret Clifford, the eldest daughter of the Earl of Cumberland; and in the following year he succeeded, by the death of his father, to a baronetcy, and an estate of six thousand pounds a-year: a splendid fortune at the commencement of the seventeenth century, even when encumbered with provisions for seven brothers and four sisters. †

Domestic
avocations.

His time was now occupied with the pleasures and cares which attend a country gentleman of distinction; and was successively devoted to the duties of hospitality, the improvement of his estate, the guardianship of the younger branches of his family, his favourite diversion of hawking, his books,

* Radcliffe's Essay.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 484.

and his correspondents. * The death of his brother-in-law, Sir George Savile, who left him guardian to his two sons, brought a large increase to his avocations, and drew forth some amiable traits of his character. Actuated by the remembrance of his friendship with their father, he watched over their education and their fortunes, with a degree of solicitude rarely produced by the ties either of kindred or humanity. So zealously did he prosecute a law-suit in which their estates had become involved, that during the long period of eight years which it continued, he made thirty journies to London on this account, and neglected not to attend the courts every term in which it came to be heard. †

But Wentworth was not destined to pass his life in the obscure though honourable employments of a country gentleman. He seems to have quickly attracted the notice of his county and of government; for he had not above a year enjoyed his inheritance, when he was sworn into the commission of peace, and nominated by Sir John Savile to succeed him as *Justice and Custos Rotulorum*, or Keeper of the Archives, for the West Riding of Yorkshire, an office bestowed only on gentlemen of the first con-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 2, 3, 4. *Radcliffe's Essay*.

† *Radcliffe*.

sideration.* The resignation of Savile, although apparently voluntary, proceeded from quarrels with his neighbours; the result of his restless disposition: † this had caused him to be denounced to government as a disturber of his county; ‡ and it was the moderation of the Lord Chancellor, Ellesmere, which permitted him to save appearances by his resignation.

1617.
His difference with
Buckingham.

Savile, however, was not of a temper to remain tranquil, and the successor, whom he had reluctantly nominated, soon became the object of his decided enmity. Having found means to interest in his favour William Duke of Buckingham, who at that period governed the councils of King James, he meditated a restoration to his former office. At his instance the duke wrote to Wentworth, informing him that the king, having again taken Sir John Savile into his favour, had resolved to employ him in his service; and requesting that he would freely return the office of Keeper of the Archives to the man who had voluntarily consigned it to his hands. Wentworth, instead of complying, exposed the misrepresentations of his antagonist, showed that his resignation had been wrung from him by necessity, and indicated his intention of coming to London to make good his assertion.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 3.

† Ibid. p. 2.

‡ See his letter, *ibid.*

The duke, though often regardless of giving offence in the pursuit of his purposes, did not judge this a sufficient occasion to risk the displeasure of the Yorkshire gentlemen. He replied with much seeming cordiality, assuring Wentworth that his former letter proceeded entirely from misinformation, and that the king had consented to dispense with his service, only from the idea that he himself desired an opportunity to resign.* This incident is remarkable, as having laid the first foundation of that animosity with Buckingham, which led the way to many questionable circumstances in the conduct of Wentworth. The duke was not of a disposition to forget even the slightest opposition to his will; and Wentworth was not a man to be injured with impunity.

An opportunity soon occurred of retaliating the Member of Parliament. ill offices of Savile. A parliament having been summoned to meet in 1621, Wentworth had so well improved his connections and popularity, as to give him a confident hope of being returned for his county. The contests which, during the reign of James, had taken place between the king and the commons, and the power which that house was found to possess of controlling the measures of the crown, had now rendered a seat for a county a leading object of ambition. Gentlemen of the first

* See both letters in *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. 1. p. 4.

rank and fortune sought, in this station, an opportunity of signalizing their talents and influence, or of resisting the dreaded encroachments of the court. In the prosecution of this first object of his ambition, Wentworth gave indications of that vigour and address, by which he was afterwards distinguished. In some of his letters which still remain, we find him dexterously stimulating the exertions of his friends, or diverting the endeavours of his opponents. That his hopes might not be disappointed by vain professions, he procured the petty officers of the several hundreds to draw out lists of such voters as positively engaged to appear at York, on the day of election, in support of his interests.* The other candidates for the county were Sir John Savile, and Calvert, Secretary of State; and Wentworth now revenged his quarrel on the former, by espousing the interests of the latter. Having secured his own return, he zealously laboured to engage the freeholders in an opposition to the old disturber of their county; and, still apprehensive of Calvert's failure, from the extensive influence of Savile, his ardour for the attainment of his object seems to have rendered him little scrupulous about the means. In a letter to the secretary, "I have heard," says he, "that when Sir Francis Darcy opposed Sir Thomas Lake in a mat-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 8, 9, 10, 11.

ter of like nature, the lords of the council writ to Sir Francis to desist. I know my lord chancellor is much your friend in this business: a word to him, and such a letter would make an end of all." *

Wentworth appeared in the House of Commons at a period when an unusual combination of circumstances drew forth a display of intrepidity and eloquence. Our political constitution, having met with unexpected accidents which shocked and discomposed its component parts, exhibited effects, that seemed altogether surprising, when their causes were not understood. Yet the order in which the successive incidents arose was natural, and the consequences scarcely avoidable. A short exposition of this remarkable progress will not, perhaps, be devoid of interest, and is essentially necessary to a proper comprehension of Wentworth's principles and conduct.

The introduction, or rather the completion of the feudal system, in the reign of William I., gave a considerable addition to the royal authority. Historical sketch of the English constitution. The proprietors of land were now made to acknowledge a dependence on their monarch; were bound to administer specific aids to his revenue; and in their tenures, acknowledged an obligation to follow his standard. Yet, unless within the limits of his

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 10.

own demesnes, he found his power circumscribed by very definite boundaries. The barons, who in these days formed the parliament, relinquished to the king the right of declaring war and concluding peace, but retained many privileges which rendered them an active portion of the government. They formed the last resort in judicial appeals, and possessed an indispensable voice in all laws affecting the nation at large. Without their consent, no tax beyond the aids stipulated by the feudal tenures could be levied on the subjects; and by their decision alone could any of their peers be deprived of his property, his liberty, or his life. With a precaution more to be admired than expected in a rude age, they procured the signature of the sovereign to written declarations of these privileges; and, by such charters, transmitted to their posterity a knowledge and assurance of rights, which oral tradition would soon have involved in doubt and perplexity. Of the Great Charter, so called from its more complete and accurate enumeration of national privileges, so anxious were the framers to diffuse the authority, that they caused a copy of it to be deposited in every diocese throughout the kingdom, and one to be transmitted to Ireland, for the benefit of that recent conquest.

When the representatives of the people, in consequence of great improvements in the state of the middle ranks, afterwards became a component part

of the Parliament, they shared in the powers and privileges previously attached to that body, obtaining some peculiarly to themselves, and enjoying others in common with the great barons. The last resort in judicial proceedings remained exclusively with the lords; the first motion for granting contributions was appropriated by the commons; while the discussion and sanction of all general laws became equally the privilege of both.

But these rights were not preserved and transmitted to posterity, without incessant precautions and repeated struggles. The subjects were interested in preserving undiminished the power of the Parliament; the king was prompted to gratify his ambition by the extension of his authority. Advanced, by the institution of feudal tenures, from the leader of independent chiefs, to be the sovereign of a great kingdom, he still found an uneasy restraint in the ancient privileges of his barons. To increase his revenue, to revenge his quarrels, to remove some obnoxious opponent, he was occasionally tempted to transgress the limits which long usage or express charters had prescribed, and to make illegal inroads on the persons and property of his subjects.

On these occasions, the barons appealed for redress to the same violent means by which the injuries had been inflicted. With arms in their hands, and an escort of military vassals in their train,

they came to the national council, compelled the monarch to renounce such acts for the future, and obliged him to give them a written assurance of his good faith, either by the grant of a new charter, or an explicit confirmation of those already obtained. The monarch, indeed, felt little scruple in violating promises which had been extorted from his apprehensions ; and when the barons were dispersed, and their vassals disbanded, he too often renewed those oppressive acts which had roused their indignation. On such occasions, the barons had no other resource than to betake themselves again to arms, and to procure a new confirmation of rights, of which they found their courage the only effectual guardian. It was in this manner that the Great Charter was wrested from the fears of King John ; he had, however, no sooner ratified it, than he proceeded to violate its provisions, and destroy its promoters ; and its next confirmation was purchased by a civil war, and even by the introduction of a foreign power into the kingdom. Such was the apprehension infused into the barons by repeated infringements that, in the course of a few reigns, they procured from their monarchs thirty successive ratifications of the Great Charter.

1215. During the reigns which immediately succeeded the Norman Conquest, the independent patrimony of the crown, united to the aids imposed by the military tenures, was sufficient to support the

peace-establishment of the monarch, while the military services, by which all the lands in the kingdom were held, provided an ample resource for the exigencies of war. In this state of things, the sovereign had no temptation, beyond the suggestions of unreasonable passions, to encroach on the rights of his subjects, nor they any means beyond their military force, to secure themselves against his injustice.

Only a few reigns, however, had elapsed, before the relative condition of the sovereign and the subject had undergone a material change. The introduction of manufactures and commerce gradually presented new objects of desire, and led to an increased expenditure ; the rapacity of courtiers, and the improvident profusion of monarchs, produced a rapid dilapidation of the royal demesnes. The system of military tenures, then the only regular resource for warfare, was found to include, under a formidable appearance, a great deal of weakness and inefficiency. The vassals could not be dragged to the standard of their lords, nor the lords to the campaigns of their sovereign ; and, at length, it became necessary to commute their military services for a very inadequate contribution in money. But if the sovereign now felt himself straitened even on ordinary occasions, far short did all his supplies fall of the resources required by the splendid ambition of succeeding monarchs.

The subjugation of Scotland and of France, the magnificent enterprises of Edward I. and Edward III. demanded too extensive preparations to be defrayed by any independent revenues appertaining to the crown.

Edward I.
and III.

1377.

In these circumstances, the only resource of the monarch was to apply to the liberality of Parliament, without whose authority he could levy no contribution on the subjects; and that assembly, having now, in their grants, a forcible argument to move the sovereign, employed it to procure those confirmations of their rights, which they had formerly obtained by force of arms. The most spirited and ambitious monarchs, the Edwards, intent on the prosecution of their warlike enterprises, made little scruple of purchasing supplies by the concession of statutes for the protection of popular rights. And so well did the Parliaments employ their advantage, that, by the conclusion of the reign of Edward III. they had ascertained, with considerable accuracy, the limits of their own privileges and the king's prerogative; and had passed those statutes for the protection of persons and property, which are still appealed to against the encroachments of arbitrary power.

But in these rude ages, it was one thing to obtain a law, and another to insure its observance. During the interval of his necessities, the prince was enabled to violate his promises, infringe the

statutes, and trespass both on the persons and property of the subjects. Even the members of Parliament found themselves divested of their ancient security. The nobles, now dissipating their revenues on the luxuries of the age, no longer beset the throne with an array of armed retainers; and while the monarch was relieved from this source of apprehension, he could, with impunity, trample on the privileges of the commons, who individually possessed little influence, and, as a body, were held in contempt by the hereditary aristocracy. Sometimes he interrupted their deliberations; sometimes he endeavoured to extort their grants by threats, instead of winning them by concessions; and at other times he took more severe methods with the refractory members, and punished their opposition to his will by fines and imprisonment.

Yet amidst these disorders, it was evident, from the structure of our constitution, that the question between the power of the sovereign and the privileges of Parliament would, at a future period, be brought to a final decision, and the opposition of the one, or the encroachments of the other, be effectually terminated. When the people, by the progress of wealth and knowledge, should become too powerful and too high-spirited to permit the illegal treatment of their representatives, and when the monarch, by the progressive increase of expence, or by farther dilapidations of the royal de-

meanes, should find his revenues inadequate, the important discussion was no longer to be avoided. It would then become indispensable, either that he should submit, with good faith, to the limitations of his power ; or that, betaking himself to violence, he should break through our ancient constitution, abolish the privileges of Parliament, and render himself the undisputed master of the lives and property of his subjects.

Towards this eventful crisis, affairs continued gradually to approach, but in their progress were accelerated or retarded by various accidents. During the sanguinary contests between the houses of York and Lancaster, the greatest families among the nobility had been extirpated, all of them had suffered in their influence, and the Commons, being brought more nearly to a level with the Peers, occupied a more conspicuous station in Parliament. But the same causes rendered the monarchs less regardful of the privileges of the Commons, which formerly they had been willing to extend as a counterbalance to the powerful barons ; and, at the accession of the house of Tudor, the Parliament felt a great diminution of that authority which it had enjoyed a century before. Henry VII. held in his hand the sword of a conqueror ; and while frequent insurrections gave him a plausible pretext for vengeance, it was not without imminent hazard that any member of Parliament could oppose his

will. By the resumption of grants, by forfeitures, by arbitrary fines, and an economy equal to his rapacity, Henry had amassed treasures beyond any monarch of his age ; yet the progressive increase of expence was silently producing circumstances against which such precautions could not long avail ; and when his avarice tempted him to make demands on his Commons, their resistance showed him that they possessed a powerful check for his more indigent successors.

From the treasures amassed by his father, Henry VIII. for some time supplied his profusion ; from the pillage of the monasteries he derived some extraordinary resources ; and the dread of his displeasure, or a desire to promote the Reformation, occasionally moved the liberality of the Commons. Yet at times they showed the power as well as the spirit to resist his demands ; and they eventually gained more than they suffered from his precipitate passions. At the commencement of his reign he received from them a confirmation of his title ; he delivered up to their vengeance the ministers of his father's extortions ; he procured their sanction to his innovations in religion, to his marriages, to his repeated alterations in the order of succession, and showed, that he accounted their authority sufficient to ratify a change of any description. At no period was the omnipotence of Parliament a more established doctrine. It was not enough that More

confessed its power to make or depose a king; he incurred a capital sentence, because he would not acknowledge its right to confer a control over the consciences of men. *

During the short reigns of Edward and Mary, the ascendancy of the Parliament increased, as well as the difficulties of the prince. While the debts contracted by Henry were not liquidated by Edward, and were greatly augmented by Mary, the royal revenue was still farther impoverished by alienations of the crown lands. The determined resistance which the Parliament made to the demands of the bigoted but odious Mary, exalted its popularity, and placed it in a still more favourable condition to avail itself of the distresses of the crown.

Elizabeth. That conflict between the Crown and the Commons, which now seemed on the verge of commencing, was for a while delayed by the spirit and the prudence of Elizabeth. Her concurrence with the undeviating frugality of Burleigh, enabled her to free the crown from its overwhelming encumbrances; and to provide for more than her ordinary expences, in her independent resources. As she could not endure to have her lofty pretensions called in question, she never applied to her Commons, unless in a case of evident necessity,

* See the Life of More.

and there were various circumstances which rendered them well inclined to supply her wants. The complaisance due to her sex, the admiration excited by her talents, her conspicuous economy, and her connection with the dearest interests of the Protestant religion, occasionally drew from them more liberal grants than had been accorded to any of her predecessors. Yet even these advantages could not prevent them from mingling a discussion of their grievances with that of her demands, or from uniting in their projects the limitation of her power with the relief of her wants. At times they burst forth into those enthusiastic pretensions of liberty, which the progress of knowledge had now developed and enhanced.* Elizabeth employed all her vigour and address to repress this rising spirit. She answered their high claims by assumptions still more lofty: she endeavoured to curb their freedom of speech by high-sounding injunctions, and even by imprisoning the most refractory members: she strove to conceal her inability to maintain such violent stretches of power, by receding, as of her own free grace, while it was yet time: and, to display the independence of her resources, she more than once remitted the supplies which they had granted. Yet she precipitated the distresses of the crown by a large alienation

* See the speeches of Peter Wentworth in Hume, Chap. xl.

of the crown lands : and she put a fatal weapon into the hands of the factious, by the unexampled act of bringing a sovereign to the scaffold.

James I. In the combination of circumstances which attended James on his accession, important discussions between the sovereign and the people were not long to be avoided. While his independent resources, from alienations and the increased expence of living, were scarcely sufficient for his ordinary occasions ; his parliament was not likely to grant him further supplies without exacting reciprocal concessions. There were many abuses to be reformed, many privileges to be asserted, many branches of the prerogative to be defined. The Commons now included a large proportion of the wealth and talents of the country : they were too much connected with the peers, by the ties of kindred and condition, to have separate interests ; and if parliament had shown a disposition to resist the encroachments of the most respected of their native sovereigns, it was not probable that they would show deference to an untried foreigner.

In this conjuncture, which took place during the youth of Wentworth, two expedients would have been requisite for the prevention of civil dissensions : the limitation of the royal prerogative by barriers so clearly defined, as effectually to guard the subject from encroachments ; and the separation of the king's expenditure from that of the public.

Without the former of these provisions, it was in vain to expect that the Commons would pay liberally towards a government which filled them with apprehension. Without the latter, no concession could purchase security to the prerogative: every grant for national purposes would continue to be regarded as a favour to the monarch, and a ground for demanding a farther limitation of his power. But of these expedients, the separation of the king's expenditure from that of the nation, however simple and obvious it may now appear, does not seem to have once occurred either to the prince or the people.

The limitation of the prerogative was a doctrine to which James could not endure to listen. Ignorant of the constitution of England, and in a great measure of the feelings of mankind, the excess of his natural timidity made him regard any discussion of his power with horror. Anxious to believe what he desired to be true, and misled by a crowd of flatterers, he had reasoned himself into a conviction that his power was derived from some high ordinance of the Divinity; that his subjects were delivered over to him to use according to his good pleasure; that their rights were the mere gifts of his free grace; that, by his permission, they might lay their grievances at the foot of his throne; but that it was the height of impiety for them to resist, or even to question the acts of one who was

Despotic
disposition
of James.

accountable to God alone. These visionary notions, the offspring of a weak judgment and a consummate vanity, James did not attempt to conceal ; he was led, by the same folly which engendered them, to thrust them forward on all occasions. Even while he held out his hand for supplies, he told his parliament, that, " as to dispute what God *may* do is blasphemy, but what God *wills*, that divines may lawfully and do ordinarily dispute and discuss ; so it is sedition in subjects to dispute what a king *may* do in the height of his power. But just kings will ever be willing to declare what they will do, if they will not incur the curse of God. I will not be content," he continues, " that my power be disputed upon ; but I shall ever be willing to make the reason appear of my doings, and rule my actions according to *my* laws." *

These maxims of arbitrary power were not merely the transient ebullitions of a distempered vanity : they were occasionally developed in practice, under very offensive circumstances. By a proclamation, James interfered with the rights of election, specified a disqualification which should incapacitate any member from holding his seat ; and, placing this edict on a footing with a statute, declared every offender against it to be punishable with fine and

* Hume from King James's Works, p. 531.

imprisonment. * He interfered also with the freedom of debate among the Commons, dissolved them in wrath when they would not accede to his requisitions, and imprisoned such of the members as had ventured to signalize themselves by opposition. Determined rather to encounter extremities, than submit to the limitation of his authority, he is said to have soon formed the resolution of governing, if possible, without parliaments. †

A rigid economy, by diminishing the amount of the arbitrary exactions now requisite, might for a season have lessened the public discontent. In avoiding foreign wars, the great source of expenditure, James, indeed, exhibited the utmost caution : but so nearly was this caution allied to pusillanimity, that he became contemptible abroad, without gaining, among his subjects, the reputation of prudence. Their ridicule was, however, converted into indignation, when they observed that the respectability of the kingdom was neglected, only to procure resources for the miserable dissipation of a court. ‡ His largesses to his servile courtiers and his needy favourites were as profuse as if his wealth had been immeasurable. Warrants under the privy seal to levy contributions from particular persons, § an arbitrary increase of the rates of customs fixed by

* Winwood, Vol. II. p. 18, 19.

† Wilson, p. 46.

‡ Rushworth, Vol. I. 157.

§ Ibid.

law, the sale of monopolies, excessive fines in the Star Chamber, were the means which he employed to replenish his exhausted exchequer; and the nation beheld the stretches of despotism employed for the gratification of the meanest corruption.*

The open opposition of the subjects to the sovereign might, for some time, have been repressed by the veneration attached to the person of kings. Among our countrymen, this sentiment had been greatly exalted by the talents, the vigour, the intrepidity of the race of Tudor; and, in Elizabeth, they had admired a stateliness and energy, which seemed to exalt her above her sex, and render her the appropriate possessor of the diadem. But the figure, the manners, the disposition of James were incompatible with sentiments of reverence. A thin person, of middle stature, swelled out with clothes, loosely hung around him, and quilted to resist a dagger; a homely countenance, a tongue too big for the mouth, and a correspondent utterance, were all calculated to excite ridicule.† Childish and often coarse in his ordinary conversation, he never failed to intermingle with his most dignified public exhibitions some strokes of burlesque. While he showed a pitiful jealousy of

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 157. Rapin, Vol. II. p. 185.

† Neal, Vol. II. p. 140.

men of great parts, * he chose his favourites for the most superficial qualifications, and submitted to their influence with almost implicit deference. The discreetest of his minions, whom he created Earl of Montgomery, pretended to no qualification but skill in dogs and horses; † and if men were amazed to see Carre and Villiers, two ignorant though handsome youths, successively invested with the supreme direction of public affairs, they were still more scandalized to behold the monarch take the birch in his hand and act the pedagogue to his young minions. With a boyish familiarity, those who approached him were addressed by nicknames:‡ and if his foreign diplomacy brought him little honour, he was at least dexterous in making matches among his courtiers. In his conversation, the same folly was softened by an appearance of innocence. He swore profanely, and often got drunk; and when his senses returned, he would weep like a child, and hope that God would not impute to him his infirmities. §

The respect which James lost as a man, he might still have retained as the fountain of honour; and, by a judicious distribution of the ensigns of

* Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 59.

† Ibid.

‡ His son, the prince, he called Baby Charles; his prime minister, Buckingham, he named Stenny.

§ Neal, Vol. II. p. 140.

rank, might have surrounded his throne with an able and high-spirited nobility. But those distinctions, so warily bestowed by the sagacious Elizabeth, were lavished, by her imprudent successor, without measure or discrimination. A needy and obscure minion no sooner caught his attention, than he was immediately raised to the highest honours; and the general contempt, excited by this profusion of titles, was seen in pasquinades, purporting to be "aids to short memories in recollecting the new nobility." But still more degraded did honorary distinctions become, when James affixed to them a price, and considered them as a means of relieving his necessities. A proportionate price was affixed to each rank; and an order of hereditary knighthood, under the denomination of baronets, was instituted to tempt the vanity of less wealthy purchasers.* So low was the simple title of knighthood now held in the estimation of the court, that all who possessed forty pounds a-year were compelled, under a penalty, to receive it, or, by payment of the fees, to compound for declining it.†

Religious opinions at that period engrossed great

* Rapin, Vol. II. p. 185. The purchase-money of an Earl's patent was twenty thousand pounds, of a Viscount's fifteen thousand, of a Baron's ten thousand; while a Baronetcy could be had for one thousand and ninety-five pounds.

† Rapin, Vol. II. p. 185.

ly the minds of men, and, from a skilful management of them, James might have derived a vast increase of influence. At his accession, the adherents of the established forms, and the abettors of a farther reformation, were competitors for the favour of their new monarch. From his presbyterian education, the latter expected at least a cessation of the persecution against them; and the former would have been sufficiently willing to compound for their apprehensions, by this concession. But James, without skill to balance these factions, and without any steady principles in regard to either doctrine or forms, hastened to embrace exclusively the party which most willingly received his maxims of absolute power. In Scotland, a zealous presbyterian, he had branded the episcopal service as "an evil mass said in English;" and had told his parliament, "that he minded not to bring in Papistical or Anglicane bishops." * But he had spent only a few months in England, when *No Bishop, No King*, became his current maxim, and to root out presbyterians and puritans his favourite project. † The leading bishops had the penetration to discover his weak side, and availed themselves of it with dexterity. They readily acknowledged whatever pretensions he chose to arrogate, and were

* Calderwood, p. 256, 418.

† Neal, Vol. II. p. 3. Hume, VI. p. 13.

forward to maintain his divine right, when they found him willing to allow them an equally sublime origin. Nothing could be more gross than the flattery of several of these unworthy sons of the church. When James gave his sanction to that high commission and oath *ex officio*, against which we have seen Burleigh remonstrating, Archbishop Whitgift cried out in transport, "Undoubtedly your Majesty speaketh by the special assistance of God's Spirit!" * When the king had called before him some puritan doctors to a public disputation, and, to use his own phrase, "had soundly peppered them off," Bishop Bancroft, the first assertor of the divine right of episcopacy, † falling on his knees, exclaimed, "My heart melteth for joy, that Almighty God, of his singular mercy, has given us such a king, as since Christ's time has not been." ‡ When James, at his table, proposed the question, "Whether he might not take his subjects' money when he needed it, without all this formality of parliament?" a complaisant bishop immediately replied, "God forbid that you should not; you are the breath of our nostrils." § Dr Cavel, vicar-general to the archbishop, wrote a book, in which he affirmed that the king is not bound by

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 19. Kennet, p. 665.

† Neal, Vol. II. p. 83.

‡ Ibid. p. 18.

§ Hume, Vol. VI. p. 75. from preface to Waller's Works.

his laws, nor by his coronation oath ; that he is not obliged to call parliaments to make laws, but may do it without them ; and that it is a great favour to admit the consent of the subject in giving subsidies. Dr Blackwood, another clergyman, wrote on the same subjects, and forgot so far what he owed to the respectability of his profession as to attempt to prove " that the English were all slaves from the Norman Conquest." *

In opposition to these doctrines, the puritans proceeded with a very bad grace to adduce those principles of government, which they had discovered in their free investigation into civil and religious institutions. James, struck with the contrast, chose his party without hesitation. He now affirmed that presbytery, which he associated with puritanism, " agreed as well with monarchy, as God and the devil ;"† and having fortified the bishops with his authority, proceeded to the destruction of this foe both in England and Scotland. Bancroft, created archbishop as a reward of his services, having revived those articles of Whitgift, which Burleigh had declared to resemble the Roman inquisition, ‡ deprived by their means many clergymen of their livings. § To arm himself with still

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 72.

† Hume, Vol. VI. p. 14, from Fuller's Ecclesiastical History.

‡ See Life of Burleigh.

§ Neal, Vol. II. p. 38, says three hundred ; Heylyn, *Aer. Rediviv.* p. 376, makes the number, in all, only forty-five.

greater terrors, he endeavoured to wrest from the courts of Westminster-hall some of their undoubted rights. * The puritans laboured to procure a mitigation of their sufferings by a petition to the throne ; but James showed them what they had to expect, by sending their deputies unheard to jail. †

There was nothing on which James more valued himself than his skill in theological disputation ; and it was acknowledged that he wielded the controversial pen with far more address than the imperial sceptre. But while the mutability of his religious tenets exposed his sincerity to suspicion, the severity, and even the cruelty, with which he maintained his successive opinions, seemed very inconsistent with the mild spirit of Christianity. At first a zealous adherent to Calvinism, he persecuted the Arminians both at home and abroad : ‡ but finding that the abettors of the lat-

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 37.

† Winwood's Memorials.

‡ Vorstius, a disciple of Arminius, had been chosen to succeed him as a professor of divinity at Leyden. James remonstrated with the States against this open encouragement of one whom he styled an *arch-heretic, a pest, a monster of blasphemies* ; and insisted on their joining him in an attempt to " send back to hell these cursed Arminian heresies that had newly broke forth." As to the burning of this man, he generously left them to their own Christian wisdom ; but added, however, " that surely never heretic better deserved the flames." He termed Vorstius a *wicked atheist* ; Arminius an *enemy to God* ; and Bertius, who had asserted that

ter tenets among his clergy were more friendly to his maxims of absolute power, he came over to them with all his zeal, and directed his execrations against the Calvinists. Legate and Wightman, two persons who held some opinions inclining to Arianism, he had the inhumanity to deliver over to the flames. *

But Protestants of every denomination were alarmed and irritated, when they discovered that James entertained a decided sympathy with the Catholic worship. † That church, against whose abominations he had been taught to exclaim, he found to be a more strenuous assertor of despotic power than any Protestant community whatever. The pomp and splendour of her worship were exactly calculated to captivate his mind ; and could he have got rid of the uneasy doctrine of the pope's supremacy, he declared himself inclined to show her votaries every indulgence. In his first speech to parliament, " I acknowledge," said he, " the church of Rome to be our mother church, though defiled with some infirmities and corruptions. And as I

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" the saints might fall from grace," he declared to be " worthy of the fire." The States contented themselves with dismissing Vorstius ; and Brandt, their historian, very justly holds it forth, as " a very glorious thing for the United Provinces, that the blood of no heretic had been shed in that country since the Reformation,"

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 92, 93; from Fuller, b. x. p. 63, 64,

† Neal, Vol. II. p. 26. Hume, Vol. VI. p. 39.

am no enemy to the life of a sick man, because I would have his body purged of ill humours ; no more am I an enemy to that church, because I would have her reform her errors, not wishing the dethrowing of the temple, but that it might be purged and cleansed from corruption." By such imprudent and explicit declarations, the Protestants were alarmed, and began to suspect their monarch of a design to reintroduce an abhorred superstition.

With a like infatuation, James proceeded to disturb the sobriety of manners, and the religious impressions of his subjects. Without reference to the divine origin of the Sabbath, the appropriation of one day in each week for religious and moral instruction, for reflection on our duties, our errors, and the means of amendment, for reviewing our condition here, and weighing our hopes hereafter, seems the wisest of institutions for the promotion of virtue and happiness. It is thus alone that the hard-wrought labourer finds leisure to receive instruction, or to communicate to his children the fruit of his experience ; while the eager man of business, as well as the abandoned libertine, meeting with these frequent intervals of religious worship, are led to think of their duties, as well as of their gains or their pleasures. From this spring of instruction and serious reflection, knowledge and good morals naturally flow ; and the blessings of a wise and vigorous government become inviola-

ble, because they become thoroughly understood. But James, though he could learnedly discuss the decrees of God, knew nothing of the moral operation of religion. Addicted to the pleasures of the table, and immersed in the dissipation of a court, he regarded the strict morals and serious demeanour of the puritans with suspicion and aversion. He determined that his subjects should be as gay and as voluptuous as himself; and observing that the puritans in particular devoted the Sabbath to sobriety and religious exercises, he took measures to counteract this unwelcome example. He published "a declaration to encourage recreations and sports on the Lord's day," authorizing all games which were lawful through the week; and dancing, leaping, vaulting, May-games, Whitsun-ales, and Morrice-dances, were recommended as proper amusements for Sunday evening. But against the order which commanded this declaration to be read in all the churches, the more serious members of the establishment revolted no less than the puritans. Archbishop Abbot, the successor of Bancroft, refused to have it read where he resided, and James did not venture to insist on compliance.*

The number of those who desired a farther reform in the discipline of the church of England was now comparatively small, and that of the dis-

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 174, 175.

senters from her doctrines was still smaller : yet to these two classes the term puritans had been hitherto confined. But James, having wrought himself into a thorough contempt and detestation of these sectaries, imagined he could not more effectually degrade those who opposed his arbitrary exactions, and endeavoured to set limits to his power, than by branding them all with the name of puritans. By this impolitic language, which became a fashion among the courtiers, the term which he employed for degradation became exalted. The puritans, associated under the same appellation with the most wealthy, enlightened, and respected classes of the community, acquired new consideration ; and those who were imprudently assimilated in name, gradually became assimilated in opinion.*

Nor were these the only circumstances that produced unpopularity to James. The partiality displayed towards Scottish courtiers had made him, on his accession, be regarded with an evil eye by the English. His undisguised aversion to his eldest son, the darling of the nation, was construed into an unnatural jealousy ; and his apathy, on the premature death of this young prince, bore too striking a contrast to the general lamentation.†

* Neal, Vol. II. p. 123. Life of Col. Hutchinson, p. 61.

† James not only heard of his son Prince Henry's death, without discomposure, but even forbade any court mourning on the oc-

His refusal to interfere in the cause of his daughter, the Queen of Bohemia, though founded on solid reasons, excited much censure, for men could not forgive either his indifference to a son-in-law, or his dereliction of a Protestant prince.* The jealousy of his subjects was roused when James, conceiving that the daughter of a powerful king was alone a proper match for his son, began to enter into an alliance and negociation with Spain and Rome. And this intercourse excited the indignation of the public, when they saw Raleigh, celebrated for his heroism, and pitied for his long sufferings, dragged from his prison; and, under colour of an almost obsolete sentence, sacrificed to the vengeance of the Spaniards.† Such were the grievances of the nation at large: the

casion. He is said to have been exceedingly jealous of the young prince's talents and popularity.

- His daughter, Elizabeth, was married to the Elector Palatine, who, upon being raised to the throne of Bohemia by the Protestant subjects of that crown, which was elective, was attacked by the united force of the emperor and the popish electors, and stripped, both of his new kingdom and his hereditary dominions. James, much to the general discontent, beheld in tranquillity a catastrophe which, indeed, he could not probably have averted. It is from this branch of the royal stock that our present monarch is descended.

- † Raleigh was confined during eighteen years for a very dubious charge of conspiracy; and was at length, on this obsolete accusation, put to death, at the instance of the Spaniards, whom he had offended by some attacks on their South American settlements.

aristocracy, more dangerous from their station and influence, were farther exasperated by the arrogance of the favourite, Buckingham. That minion, having acquired a complete ascendancy over his master, had assumed the complete direction of national affairs. According to his sovereign pleasure, measures were framed, negotiations conducted, ministers appointed or displaced; and, amidst all these abuses, he was led, by violence of temper, to aggravate injustice by rudeness, and exasperate opposition by a vindictive spirit.

1621. Such were the principal causes, both remote and immediate, from which the national temper had received its complexion, when Wentworth first appeared in parliament. The conduct of James, and its influence on the fate of his successor, bears no faint resemblance to that of Louis XV. of France. Ten years had elapsed since the houses were last assembled, and, in that long interval, James had exhausted every expedient, which he durst hazard, to procure supplies without their intervention. But as his necessities had multiplied beyond his resources, he was at length driven to solicit from parliament what he had in vain attempted to derive from his prerogative. The recovery of the Palatinate, a favourite enterprise with the nation, he laid hold of as the pretext for his demands; and endeavoured to sooth the angry recollections of

the members, by ample apologies for his late errors.* These pretences, and these apologies, the Commons appeared to take in good part. Consisting of men whose independence, supported by large fortunes, and extensive influence, had acquired strength from living at a distance from court, amidst their tenants and connections; they felt their own importance, and proceeded in their objects without violence or precipitation. They perceived the advantage which they possessed in holding the purse-strings of the nation; and resolved to avail themselves deliberately of this single, but insurmountable check, in restraining the excesses of arbitrary authority.

* For the recovery of the Palatinate, which he never attempted, unless by some fruitless negotiations, he pledged himself with an unusual vehemence of language. He told the parliament that he should render his persuasions effectual by the strong hand of an army; and, added he, "I will engage my crown, my blood, and my soul, in the recovery." His excuses for past faults, if not conveyed with much dignity, possessed at least a blunt frankness not ill calculated to disarm resentment. "I confess," said he, "I have been liberal in my grants; but, if I be informed, I will amend all hurtful grievances. But who shall hasten after grievances, and desire to make himself popular, he hath the spirit of Satan. If I may know my errors, I will reform them. I was, in my first parliament, a novice: and, in my last, there was a kind of beasts called *Undertakers*, a dozen of whom undertook to govern the last parliament, and they led me." See his speech in Rushworth's Collections, Vol. I. p. 22, 23. The speech is somewhat differently given by Franklyn; but more as to the form of expression than the import.

Of the doubtful sincerity of James, in his professions of a tender regard for their liberties, and of an anxiety to remedy abuses, they could not fail to be aware. Even in the interval betwixt issuing the writs for Parliament, and its opening, he had endeavoured to suppress all liberty of writing or speech concerning public affairs, by a proclamation, in which he “commanded all, from the highest to the lowest, not to intermeddle, by pen or speech, with state-concernments, and secrets of empire, either at home or abroad; which were no fit themes for vulgar persons, or common meetings.”* Yet the Commons, overlooking this significant indication, sought to conciliate his good will, by making the supply of his necessities the first of their measures. Contrary to the usual course of procedure, they voted him two subsidies at the very commencement of their session; and when they afterwards proceeded to inquire into grievances, they allowed not a murmur of disrespect towards the king or his ministers, and touched only on such glaring abuses as were disavowed and given up by the court. † So liberal and moderate did this conduct appear, as to draw forth the public acknowledgments of the king:—“The House of Commons at this time,” says he, in a speech to Parliament, “have showed greater love, and used me:

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 21.

† Ibid. p. 24.

with more respect in all their proceedings, than ever any House of Commons have hitherto done to me, or, I think, to any of my predecessors."*

This happy understanding seemed to promise the most fortunate effects; but James having procured the relief of his present necessities, began, with a more scrupulous eye, to look after his prerogative. The abuses which the Commons had undertaken to investigate, he did not propose to defend; but he disliked that they should acquire, in the eyes of the people, the merit of the abolition, and appear the reformers of excesses which he had tolerated. He therefore surprised the Commons, in the midst of their labours, by announcing an intended prorogation, reproved their petition for a prolongation of their sitting, as a farther encroachment on his prerogative; and taught them, by this precipitate jealousy, to be less forward in their grants, till they had first secured the desired concessions.†

Before the term to which he had prorogued Parliament, James was overtaken by his necessities, and found it expedient to reassemble the Houses three months earlier than he once intended.‡ Unfortunately his measures, during the recess, were ill calculated to allay their irritation. He had indeed reformed most of the abuses which had

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 25. † Ibid. p. 36. ‡ Ibid. p. 39.

November
20, 1621.

excited complaint ; but he had been careful to insert in the proclamation, that “ he needed not the assistance of Parliament to reform them.” * In a new edict against political writings and conversation, he had carried his encroachments on freedom a step farther, and threatened severity, “ as well against the concealers of such discourses, as against the boldness of audacious tongues and pens.” † In the progress of the Spanish match, new concessions, it was apprehended, had been made in favour of the Catholics ; and, amidst the feeble remonstrances of James, the Elector Palatine had been finally stript of his dominions. While the Popish princes of Spain, France, and Germany, were proceeding, with a high hand, to exterminate Protestantism, the English began to tremble anew for their religion, and to look with jealousy and resentment on their monarch, who so closely confederated with its enemies. James had even had the imprudence to infringe the most indispensable privileges of the Commons, and had resented their displeasure at the prorogation, by committing to prison Sir Edwin Sandys, one of their most popular members.

It was in vain that, after their late experience, James now endeavoured to draw from them speedy supplies, by representing the immediate exigencies

* Rushworth, Vol. 1. p. 36. † Ibid.

of the Palatinate, and by assuring them that they should afterwards be permitted to continue their sittings "as long as the necessity of the state should require."* The Commons replied by a petition and remonstrance, in which they stated what they conceived to be the most imminent dangers of the nation, and the most expedient remedies. To remove the pressing apprehensions of popery, they recommended that the penal laws against the Catholics should be strictly executed; the Spanish match broken off, the prince espoused to one of his own religion, and war immediately declared against all powers concerned in the spoliation of the Palatinate. To shew their intention to grant supplies, as well as their expectation of concessions in return, they said they had already resolved to give, at the end of this session, one entire subsidy, for the sole purpose of relieving the Palatinate; and humbly besought his majesty, that "he would then also vouchsafe to give life, by his royal assent, to such bills as, before that time, should be prepared for his majesty's honour, and the good of the people."†

The intention of presenting this petition was no sooner reported to James, than, indignant that they should presume to interfere with matters appertaining to his *craft*, as he usually termed it; he

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 39.

† Ibid. p. 40, 41, 42.

wrote to the speaker, intimating his displeasure that the Commons should venture "to argue and debate publicly of matters far above their reach and capacity, to his high dishonour, and breach of prerogative royal." He commanded them to abstain, for the future, from all such discussions : and that they might not be ignorant of his resolution to enforce obedience, he desired the speaker to inform them in his name, "that he thought himself very free and able to punish any man's misdemeanours in parliament, as well during their sitting as after ; which he meant not thenceforth to spare, upon any occasion of any man's insolent behaviour." *

To acquiesce in this formidable assumption, would have been to renounce all their privileges, and annihilate their utility. They drew up a new petition, equally firm and moderate, defending the tenor of their former remonstrance, and asserting that their freedom of debate, a privilege altogether indispensable, was "their ancient and undoubted right, an inheritance received from their ancestors, and often confirmed by his majesty's own speeches and messages." †

The reply of James was no less explicit and peremptory than his letter to the speaker. He compared their audacious interposition in affairs of state, when called on for supplies, to the presump-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 43, 44. † Ibid. p. 46.

tion of a merchant who should imagine that his advance of a loan for carrying on a war entitled him to dictate its operations. He reminded them that he was an old and experienced king, who needed none of their lessons ; and advised them, in their deliberations, to recollect the old maxim, that no man should pretend beyond his own craft.* As to his son's match, he "desired to know how they could have presumed to determine in that point, without committing high treason."† Their claims as an ancient and undoubted right and inheritance, he could not allow ; but accounted it a more proper style, "that their privileges were derived from his grace, and the permission of him and his ancestors." He, however, assured them that they had nothing to dread, if they took care not "to trench on his prerogative ;" which, added he, "would enforce us, or any just king, to retrench of their privileges, them that would pare his prerogative and the flowers of his crown." †

These pretensions and threats produced much agitation among the Commons, and a few days afterwards, a commission for their adjournment to the eighth of February was lodged in the hands of the clerk. Apprehensive of a dissolution, they pro-

December

* *Ne auctor ultra crepidam*, was the literal expression of the king.

† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 46 to 52.

ceeded, without delay, to vindicate, in a protestation, their parliamentary rights and privileges. Here their claims to freedom of speech, their inviolability for all proceedings in parliament, and their title to debate and counsel on all affairs of state, were asserted in language remarkable for its vigour, temperance, and decision. *

Enraged at this new trespass of the Commons, James commanded their journal-book to be brought to him in council; tore out, with his own hand, the leaf which contained the protestation; and, by a speedy dissolution of parliament, proved his determination to set their pretensions at defiance. To intimidate them more effectually, he laid his hands on the more active members: some he imprisoned, and others he exiled, under pretence of public employments, to Ireland. To silence the general murmurs, he enforced his former proclamations against speaking of state affairs; and commanded the judges, in their several circuits, to do exemplary justice on all such offenders. †

January 6,
1622.

That which Wentworth acted, during the session of this parliament, was conspicuous for its circumspection and moderation. We indeed find him active in promoting the expulsion of a member, who had spoken with much irreverence of a bill for repressing those licentious sports

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 52, 53. † Ibid. 55.

on the Sabbath, which the royal proclamation had authorized and encouraged; and when the king hazarded the assertion that the privileges of the Commons were enjoyed by his permission, and their deliberations controllable by his authority, Wentworth urged the house to declare explicitly that their privileges were their right and inheritance, and the direction of their proceedings subject to no cognizance but their own. The abrupt dissolution of parliament, he followed with expressions of regret and apprehension.* Yet his language towards the court was always respectful, and his eloquence more frequently employed to moderate than excite the zeal of his colleagues. Connected intimately with some members of the administration, and holding an office, which, though inconsiderable, might lead to others of more importance, he seems to have been more solicitous to avoid unacceptable conduct, than to obtain distinction from his opposition. The favour, which he found means to acquire with James, was afterwards his frequent boast.†

From the mutual animosity with which the king and the parliament had separated, it was not to be expected that James would have a speedy recourse to this national council. Yet within two years after the angry dissolution, writs were issued for a

Again in
Parliament,
1624.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 15.

† Ibid. p. 35, 36.

new parliament ; and that body assembled to hear language of unusual concession from the throne. Changes that had occurred in the interval, and the all-powerful ascendancy of Buckingham, produced this altered tone. That favourite had perceived the necessity of ingratiating himself with the prince, who was soon to mount the throne ; and the repeated delays of the Spanish match seemed to afford him a favourable opportunity. He artfully represented to Charles the advantage which he would derive from visiting Spain in person : the delays of the match would be forthwith removed ; the generosity of the Spaniards engaged by his confidence in their honour ; and the affections of his mistress awakened by his courage and unparalleled gallantry. Having, by these arts, rendered the prince impatient for the enterprise, he succeeded in extorting from the feebleness of James a reluctant consent to a project, which so manifestly endangered the life or liberty of the heir apparent. Charles and Buckingham, accompanied by only two attendants, now proceeded on their romantic journey ; and, having passed undiscovered through France, arrived in safety at Madrid. The Spaniards, charmed with the gallantry and confidence of the prince, received him with distinguished honours ; and, delighted to discover in his manners a stayed, serious, dignified deportment, so congenial to their own, they beheld him with impressions daily more

favourable. But in Buckingham they saw a very different character: his gay, volatile demeanour, his unreserved familiarity with the prince, and the undisguised impetuosity of his passions, were all occasions of disgust to the Spaniards. These sentiments were fully returned by Buckingham. Insulting their customs without scruple, he had even the temerity to engage in a personal quarrel with the reigning favourite of the Spanish court, and returned to England with a decided determination to break off the match, and involve the nations in hostility. *

The preservation of peace, and the marriage of his son with a daughter of Spain, had long been the pride of James, the darling object of his cares. But Buckingham too well knew the weakness of the monarch to be deterred by these obstacles; and, assisted by the endeavours of the prince, over whom he had, during the journey, acquired an unlimited ascendancy, he obliged the reluctant king to terminate the negotiations, and attempt the recovery of the Palatinate from Spain and her allies, by force of arms. But the royal coffers furnished no resources for war: the arbitrary exactions, imposed by royal authority, supplied only the immediate necessities of the court; and a parliament, however hateful, was the only resort. The cour-

* Clarendon's Hist. of the Rebellion, edit. 1720, Vol. I. p. 11 to 13.

tiers, taking their tone from Buckingham, now seemed to have forgot their tender apprehensions for the prerogative; and advised their sovereign "to cast some crumbs of his crown among the people, and those crumbs would work miracles, and satisfy many thousands." * The king, yielding to the irresistible control of his favourite, began to hold the same language; and he who had threatened and dissolved a parliament, for presuming to discuss affairs of state, now assembled them by his writs, "to advise with him in matters concerning his estate and dignity." † His speeches were conceived in a similar strain. He could not help reminding them that his condescending to ask their advice was entirely gratuitous; yet he called on them to deliberate freely on the present weighty affairs. Touching shortly, though feelingly, on his own necessities, he strongly urged them to provide adequate resources for the war; and that no suspicion might be entertained of his diverting the supplies to other purposes, he offered to commit the receipt as well as the issue to themselves. ‡

Parliament had many reasons, besides this unusual complaisance, to lend a favourable ear to the demands of their monarch. If the people had viewed the project of the Spanish match with ap-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 115.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. Vol. I. p. 130, 131.

prehension, their fears were increased tenfold when they saw their prince voluntarily consign himself into the hands of that suspected nation. Even should his life and freedom be spared, they trembled lest their future sovereign should fall a prey to the arts of the Catholics, and become the enemy and persecutor of their religion. The return of the prince in safety, and still a Protestant, was hailed with universal acclamations; and the public joy was raised to its height, by the announced rupture of the Spanish match, and a war for the recovery of the Palatinate. Parliament, partaking in the general exultation, proceeded to show their good will by immediately voting three subsidies and three fifteenths to be levied within a year after the declaration of war. Yet, mindful of the former proceedings of the court, they accepted the king's offer to entrust the receipt and disbursement of the supplies to a committee of their own members.* And though they expressed, in strong

* The Commons, as well as the king, seem to have regarded this as an act of extraordinary concession; yet it merely invested the committee with a power to see that the money was applied only to the purposes of the war for which it was raised. The direction of the warlike operations, as well as of the objects for which the particular disbursements were to be made, the king reserved entirely to himself; and had recourse to the committee only as his treasurers. Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 140. In this measure, we find an undesigned approximation to that expedient, so essential for the prevention of jealousies and quarrels between the sovereign and the

terms, their gratitude for his majesty's conciliating language, they ungraciously overlooked the subject of his private necessities. After the investigation of a few abuses, and the transaction of some unimportant affairs, the houses were adjourned without any symptoms of interrupted harmony. *

Conduct.

During this session, in which Buckingham bore unbounded sway, Wentworth seems to have refrained from any particular activity. Previous to the assembling of parliament, he expresses, in a letter to his brother-in-law, Lord Clifford, his slender hopes from a display of parliamentary talents, and the necessity of caution and reserve. "My opinion of these meetings your Lordship knows sufficiently well; how services done there are coldly requited on all sides, and, which is worse, many times misconstrued. I judge farther the path we are like to walk in is now more narrow and slip-

people, the separation of the king's private expences from those of the nation. It seems strange how Mr Hume should have been led to represent this transaction as "an imprudent concession, of which the consequences might have proved fatal to royal authority." Chapter xlix. From some other expressions in the same passage, he appears to have conceived that the committee were to determine the objects to which the money should be applied, as well as to superintend its receipt and disbursement. This power is now much more completely possessed by the House of Commons, who have annually laid before them a detailed account of the national receipt and expenditure.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 136, 147.

perty than formerly, yet not so difficult but may be passed with circumspection, patience, and, principally, silence." * From the discourses of James, as well as the delays which he interposed, Wentworth distinctly perceived the monarch's aversion to the Spanish war; and augured that he would one day seize an opportunity, to discover his resentment against those who had dragged him into hostilities. †

As yet, Wentworth looked with apparent calmness on the agitations of political ambition, and discovered a mind capable of enjoying the tranquil dignity of an independent fortune. By one of those pestilential fevers, which, from the closeness and filthiness of the streets, formerly ravaged London, he had lost his wife, and suffered much in his own constitution. A tertian ague, which succeeded the fever, and which frequently recurred during the interval between the two Parliaments, had obliged him to seek again for health in the free air and vigorous amusements of the country. Here his retirement was of considerable duration; and, in the life of a man in general so beset with care, and so anxiously devoted to the pursuit of ambition, it is pleasant to dwell on an interval of philosophic tranquillity. His letters to his friends in London discover no symptoms of a yearning ambi-

Illness and
retirement to
the country

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 19. † *Ibid.* p. 20.

tion, endeavouring to hide itself under the veil of an affected philosophy. Unconstrained and sportive, they appear the effusions of a mind which entered fully into those temperate enjoyments. To Secretary Calvert, an intimate friend and correspondent, he writes thus :—

“ Matters worthy your trouble, these parts afford none, where our objects and thoughts are limited to looking on a tulip, hearing a bird sing, a rivulet murmuring, or some such petty but innocent pastime, which, for my part, I begin to feed myself in, having, I praise God, recovered more in a day by open country air, than in a fortnight’s time in that smothering one of London. By my troth I wish you, divested of the importunity of business, here for half a dozen hours ; you should taste how free and fresh we breathe, and how *procul metu fruimur modestis opibus* ; a wanting sometimes denied to persons of greater eminency in the administration of commonwealths.” *

In another letter to Mr Calvert, he takes occasion to say, that he had written some news of state affairs to his cousin Wandesford, who was interested in such things ; but to you, continues he, I

* Strafford’s Letters, Vol. I. p. 16.

have very different matters to relate ; “ that our harvest is all in, a most fine season to make fish-ponds, our plums all gone and past, peaches, quinces, and grapes, almost fully ripe ; which will, I trow, better suit with a Thistleworth * palate, and approve how we have the skill to serve every man in his cue. These only we countrymen muse of, hoping, in such harmless retirements, for a just defence from the higher powers, and possessing ourselves in contentment, pray, with Driope in the poet,

“ Et siqua est pietas, ab acutæ vulnere falcis,
Et pecoris morsu frondes defendite nostras.” †

* Secretary Calvert's country seat.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 24. In his letters at this period, Wentworth occasionally amuses himself with the follies of the king and the courtiers. He informs Secretary Calvert, that he at length had news for him from the court at Rufford, whither James, who was passionately addicted to hunting, had retired to enjoy this amusement. “ The loss of a stag, and the hounds hunting foxes instead of a deer, put the king your master into a marvellous chaff, accompanied with those ordinary symptoms better known to you courtiers, I conceive, than to us rural swains ; in the height whereof comes a clown galloping and staring full in his face :—*His blood !* (quoth he,) *am I come forty miles to see a fellow ?* and presently, in a great rage, turns about his horse, and away he goes faster than he came. This address caused his majesty and all the company to burst into a vehement laughter, and so the fume of the time was happily dispersed.” Strafford's Letters, p. 23. It does no little credit to James's good humour, that he could so heartily join in the laugh at this whimsical, but very direct satire on his personal appearance.

At this, as at other periods of his life, Wentworth was strongly alive to the calls of duty. In various letters, we discover his anxious solicitude to promote the improvement of his numerous brothers, and to provide them with suitable appointments. * Of the attention and good sense with which he guided their inexperience, we have an example in his advices to his brother Michael, who had chosen the army for his profession, and was now making a campaign in Germany. After several admonitions to aim at excellence in his profession, by an assiduous employment of his time, by a diligent observation of the transactions around him, by aiding his memory with a regular journal of all remarkable incidents which contributed either to success or defeat; he endeavours to repress the ardour and indiscretion of early years. He advises him to go on with the sober, stayed courage of an understanding man, rather than with the rash and distempered heat of an unadvised youth; and warns him, that the man who ventures himself desperately, will, even by the wise, be deemed unfit for command, since he exercises none over his own unruly and misleading passions. †

March 27,
1625.

From pleasures so serene, and from duties so commendable, Wentworth was called, by the incidents of a new reign, to scenes more active, and

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 14, 16, 18.

† *Ibid.* p. 18.

transactions more questionable. The previous conduct of Charles, who now ascended the throne, had produced a very favourable impression of his character. The strictness of his morals, the reserve of his conversation, the dignity of his external deportment, were advantageously contrasted with the dissipation, the loquacity, and awkward demeanour of his father. Of the favourable disposition of the public, he had received the most indubitable indications. On his return from Spain he had been welcomed with loud and cordial demonstrations of joy; and from his participation in the rupture with that crown, and the war for the recovery of the Palatinate, he had derived new accessions of popularity. It was therefore with confidence, as far as regarded himself, that he convoked a parliament on his accession, and requested immediate supplies. But however acceptable might be the alleged occasion, (the prosecution of the war for the Palatinate,) there were certain circumstances that rendered parliament backward in their grants.

In Parlia-
ment,
June 18,
1625.

King James had promised that vigorous measures should be taken for asserting the rights of his son-in-law; yet nothing had been effected. A considerable army had, indeed, been raised and dispatched on board of transports; but no proper measures having been taken for their disembarkation, they were so long delayed at the ports of France and Holland, to which they sailed, that,

partly from want of provisions, partly from a contagious distemper which had crept in among men so long crowded up in narrow vessels, scarcely a third of the original number came to land; and with this slender and dispirited force, no offensive operations could be attempted.* The naval preparations of James had also been very tardy; and, instead of adventurers being enriched by captures from the Spaniards, our merchantmen, now increased in number, became too often a prey to our enemies.† “It represents unto me,” says Wentworth on this occasion, “the sport of whipping the blind bear, where they lash, and that roundly too on all hands, and yet the smart and blows given so distract the poor creature, as she knows not where to take her revenge.”‡

The nation was likewise agitated by an alarm of popery. The rupture of the Spanish negotiations, and a promise of James to enforce the penal laws against recusants, had at one time allayed the public apprehension, and diffused the greatest satisfaction. It was in reference to this promise that Wentworth, in a letter to a friend, dropt an expression highly expressive of the national dread of popery. “I hope in God we shall once again put

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 154.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 22.

‡ Wentworth to Wandesford, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 22.

a ring in the nose of that leviathan, and bend and turn him to the safety of the state, and advancement of the cause of our most just and gracious God." * Such were also the hopes of the nation ; but the vanity of James soon disappointed them, and excited anew the fears for the Protestant faith. After the match with Spain was broken off, a daughter of France, seemed to him the only consort worthy of his son ; and negociations for this purpose were immediately commenced. The French court had viewed with fearful presages the alliance of England with the Spaniards, and received with joy an overture which promised to engage her permanently in their interests : but as James could not conceal his eagerness for the conclusion, they took advantage of his weakness to obtain their own conditions. All the invidious concessions in favour of popery, which had been claimed by the Spaniards, were now yielded to the French ; and experience has shown that the apprehensions of the English nation were not groundless, when, by a fatal act of compliance, the education of the royal offspring, till their thirteenth year, was confided to their popish mother. †

These, indeed, were the transactions of James ; but Charles had subscribed to all the concessions in

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 22.

† *Rushworth*, Vol. I. p. 152.

favour of popery, and betrayed no less eagerness for the match than his father. Its completion was the first important act of his reign; and the meeting of parliament was delayed till the young queen had been received in England. From these circumstances a suspicion arose that the court, aware of the evil eye with which this alliance was regarded, had anticipated remonstrances from parliament, and, to prevent them, had hastened the conclusion of the treaty: nor was it unforeseen that this conduct would affect the question of supplies. Wentworth, after alluding to the state of public opinion, speaks ironically of the match to his friend Calvert: "For my part I like it well, and conceive the bargain wholesome on our side, that we save three other subsidies and fifteenths. Less could not have been demanded for the dissolving of this treaty, and still the king your master have pretended to suffer loss, no doubt for our sake only, which certainly we should have believed." *

The conduct of Charles, in respect to this match, having impressed the nation with a suspicion of his attachment to popery, he found it expedient, in his first speech to parliament, to repel the allegation. † Nor were there wanting other circumstances to diminish his late popularity. In retaining all the mi-

Discontent
of the na-
tion.

* Wentworth to Calvert, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 24.

† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 172.

ministers of his father, he seemed to give a pledge that he would follow the same counsels; and from the resignation with which he submitted to the dictates of Buckingham, there remained no hope of a diminution of that insolent minion's authority. The popularity of the Duke, during the last session of parliament, had already vanished. It was now recollected, that, if he had brought back the prince safe, it was he who had carried him thither; that, if he had assisted to break off the Spanish match, he had zealously promoted the French; * and that many glaring abuses could be distinctly traced to his influence. If the caution with which Charles concealed his political principles, during the lifetime of his father, had bred an opinion of his prudence, it had also engendered some suspicion of his candour. And though, while prince, he had displayed no extravagance in his expenses, the profusion with which, on his accession, he had scattered among those around him the remains of the treasury, rendered it doubtful how far his frugality could resist the solicitation of courtiers. †

Influenced by these circumstances, the Commons, in their first deliberations, discovered a disposition to treat of grievances as well as supplies.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 470.

† Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, Vol. I. p. 4, 24, 25. May's History of the Parliament, p. 6, 7. edit. 1647.

As the first-fruits of their affection, however, they immediately presented his majesty with two subsidies, reserving their further liberality till some prominent abuses were investigated. * But a pestilential distemper, which extended its ravages over London, quickly interrupted their labours, and obliged the king to adjourn the session to Oxford. †

August 1,
1625.

Here, after a short recess, they assembled with dispositions by no means more favourable to the views of the court. During their previous meeting, Charles had excited some disgust by opposing his prerogative to their discussions; and by prohibiting their prosecution of one Montague, his chaplain, who had written a book, which they construed into an encouragement of popery. ‡ But this cause of offence was slight, when compared to the intelligence which now transpired, that the king had enabled the French court, by the assistance of some ships, to destroy the Protestant fleet of Rochelle, and lay siege to that town, the last refuge of the Hugonots. In the ruin of these Protestants, whom Elizabeth had cherished, whom sound policy, as well as religion, seemed to call on England to support, they saw grounds for the most gloomy apprehensions; and Buckingham, whose supreme authority pointed him out as the author of these

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 173, 174. † Ibid. p. 174.

‡ Ibid.

measures, became the marked object of their displeasure. *

The Commons were now far more disposed to investigate grievances than to vote subsidies. It was in vain that the court urged the necessities of the state, and the impossibility of continuing active hostilities without farther supplies. The Commons seemed determined to inquire how their former grants had been applied ; to obtain, in return for their concessions, the reform of various abuses ; and to bring to light the authors of the public misfortunes. Their censures now pointed very directly at the Duke of Buckingham ; when that favourite, apprehensive for his safety, induced the king to interrupt the proceedings of parliament by an abrupt dissolution. †

During these transactions, Wentworth took his station among the most conspicuous patriots. No ^{Wentworth in opposition.} change had taken place in the measures of the new reign ; there had appeared no inclination to abate the claims of the prerogative ; the insolent Buckingham still distributed the favours as well as the frowns of the court. The virtuous, the moderate, the ambitious, were all equally interested to ameliorate this state of affairs. Wentworth had

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 175, 176. Whitlocke's Memorials, p. 1, 2.

† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 191. Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 5, 25. Whitlocke, p. 2.

now reached his thirty-third year, and had attracted the attention of both parties. His connections were considerable, his talents were much respected, his vigour and decision gave him forcible claims to attention. Ready in conception, and pointed in expression, his eloquence imparted a lustre to his sentiments, and procured for his knowledge even more than adequate estimation. * His acquirements had been obtained with a method and diligence, which proved that, even in leisure and retirement, he had not lost sight of more active scenes. From his earliest youth, he had studied the graces of composition; in the most admired authors of England, of France, and of Rome, he had searched for the beauties of style; and to the popular eloquence of his age he had trained himself by a diligent attendance on the chief orators of the pulpit, the bar, and the council. When he met with an esteemed oration or tract on any subject, he deferred studying it, till he had framed a speech on the same argument: and then, from a comparison with his own essay, he endeavoured to appreciate the merits of the author, and to draw information for the correction of his own defects. †

Courted by
Buckingham.

To the man thus formidable by his capacity, acquirements, and energy, Buckingham knew that

* Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 259, 260.

† Radcliffe's Essay.

he had given unprovoked offence ; and daily apprehending an attack from the Commons, he judged it expedient to conciliate this opponent by expressions of esteem, and promises of future favour. These overtures were not unacceptable to Wentworth. To the request for his good offices, he replied with address and dignity, " That he honoured the duke's person, and was ready to serve him in the quality of an honest man and a gentleman." The duke replied by cordial acknowledgments ; and during the short remainder of the session, Wentworth exerted himself to moderate the resentment of his party. *

These friendly appearances were of short duration. The king and his minister, amidst their fears, and their resentment at the proceedings of the last parliament, had overlooked their urgent necessities, or formed vain conceptions of their independent means of supply ; for few months had elapsed when another parliament was found to be their only resource. The intervening events, however, gave no reason to hope that this assembly would prove subservient to the views of the king. For the relief of his immediate exigencies, he had compelled men to accept the title of knighthood ; employed the arbitrary and partial method

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 34.

of issuing privy-seals to particular persons ; * and with the money thus procured, he had equipped a fleet, from whose operations he expected farther supplies. The bay and harbour of Cadiz were full of valuable merchantmen ; and the galleons, which annually conveyed to Europe the treasures of America, were about this season expected. From the rich plunder of these vessels the court formed sanguine hopes ; but had the mortification to see their fleet return, disappointed in all its attempts, and with its numbers miserably reduced by a pestilential distemper. Fresh fuel was now added to the popular discontents ; the disgraces as well as the losses of the nation were the theme of complaint ; and Buckingham was denounced as the author of all public calamities. †

Compelled, by his necessities, to call a parliament in these unpropitious circumstances, Charles attempted some expedients to sooth and to weaken their opposition. As their suspicion of his secret attachment to popery seemed to have been the chief cause of their late alarm, he issued several proclamations for the suppression of recusants ; ‡ and an ancient custom furnished him with a stratagem to exclude from the House of Commons his

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 28. *Rushworth*, Vol. I. p. 199.

† *Rushworth*, Vol. I. *Clarendon*, Vol. I.

‡ *Rushworth*, Vol. I.

most active and formidable opponents. By the feudal tenures, every one was pledged, when called on, to attend the civil as well as the military business of his sovereign ; and, as a degree of honour was connected with all public appointments, the claim of the prince, thus originating, had, to the days of Charles, been acquiesced in without dispute. Among these, the office of High Sheriff, from its fatigue and expence, would often have been declined, had not the nomination of the sovereign been considered as irresistible. Besides other disadvantages, this appointment included a disability to serve in parliament ; for a person could not at the same time attend to the interests of his constituents, and discharge the duties which he owed to his king as sheriff. The rule had, indeed, been occasionally dispensed with ; but the monarch asserted a right to enforce its observance, and to prevent the sheriff, whom he had nominated, from neglecting his service to attend the call of his subjects. Of this custom, Charles, by the advice of Buckingham, now availed himself ; and by fixing on six of the most popular leaders as sheriffs for the year, he precluded their immediate re-election to parliament. *

Nov. 1625.

Wentworth heard with surprise and indignation that he was included in the number. Appointed Sheriff. Bucking-

* Rushworth, Vol. L. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 29.

ham having made his advances from fear, had regarded his friendly replies with suspicion, and having been informed that some leading men, of whom Wentworth was one, had agreed to support a prosecution against him in the next parliament, thought he should more safely trust to the inability than to the professions of his adversary. * Wentworth left no means untried to escape this unseasonable appointment. He solicited the intercession of his friends at court; but they could only remind him of the uncontrollable influence of his enemy; "that those whom he would advance were advanced; and those whom he but frowned upon were thrown down." † The duke, to conciliate the approaching parliament, by an appearance of solicitude for the recovery of the Palatinate, was now abroad on an embassy to the Low Countries; but the injunctions, which he had given before his departure, were to Charles sacred and inviolable. "I think," writes Sir Arthur Ingram to Wentworth, "if all the council that was at court had joined together in request for you, it would not have prevailed; for it was set and resolved what should be done before the great duke's going over, and from that the king would not change a tittle." ‡

Moderate
resolutions.

Another expedient still remained. The disability to serve in parliament, which was supposed

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 28. † *Ibid.* ‡ *Ibid.* p. 29.

to attend the office of sheriff, depended merely on a custom, which had been sometimes infringed, and often strenuously disputed. Some of his fellow-sufferers had consequently resolved to procure their re-election, and insist on their rights;* but after mature deliberation, a more moderate course seemed eligible to Wentworth. He had reason to think that he was by no means particularly obnoxious to the court. In reading over the list of sheriffs, the king had passed the rest without notice; but on naming Wentworth, he had added, "he is an honest gentleman."† He could reckon several of the ministers among his intimate friends; and it seemed most imprudent to bar the door of favour against himself for ever, by engaging in a doubtful and dangerous conflict with the crown. In the moderate course, to which these considerations moved him, he was confirmed by the counsels of Lord Clare, whose beautiful and accomplished daughter, Lady Arabella Hollis, he had lately married. His lordship, in reply to Wentworth's request for advice, highly commends his prudent resolves; expresses an apprehension that it was vain to oppose the claims of the king; and that, even should the election be found valid, the court, in revenge, would proceed to disfranchise the electors. He, indeed, heartily wishes success to those

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 30. † Ibid. p. 29.

who had the boldness to stand forward on this occasion ; and that their prevailing over the trick of the courtiers might produce new security for the subject and the parliament, “ and make great ones more cautious in wrestling with that high court.” Yet he would not have these advantages purchased with the danger of his son-in-law ; and he concludes with citing Wentworth’s own words, that, in such a case, “ it was much better to be a spectator than an actor.”* The event justified the caution, if not the magnanimity of this conduct : the opposition attempted to the mandates of the court proved ineffectual ; † and Sir Edward Coke, in the subordinate station of sheriff, was obliged to attend the circuits where he had once presided.

This invidious artifice, while it exposed the weakness of government, produced not the expected benefits. In the new parliament appeared the same spirit of independence, the same forcible oratory, the same dislike of the favourite, the same determined purpose to redress the public abuses : and the court now learnt with dismay that a favourable occasion will always call forth talent, and stimulate exertion.

Feb. 6,
1628.

In the opening speech, which was delivered by

* Earl of Clare to Wentworth. *Strafford’s Letters*, Vol. I. p. 31.

† Rushworth, Vol. I. 401.

the Lord Keeper, the Parliament were reminded of the supreme height and majesty of the monarch, the unspeakable privilege they enjoyed in being allowed to approach him, his many private virtues, and his uncommon affection to Parliaments. This love was now his only motive for calling them together; and the same sentiment made him unwilling to prolong their sitting, since their safety might again be brought into peril by a dangerous contagion. He therefore requested them to proceed without delay in framing good and wise laws, the express purpose of their convocation. That nothing might diminish the effect of this unusually gracious language, no mention was made of supplies. *

The Commons, taking this friendly exhortation in good part, proceeded to investigate such abuses as required the remedy of new laws. They now discovered that the expences of the crown had been needlessly increased; that new impositions and monopolies had been multiplied, and the regular customs enhanced by a new book of rates: that the duties of tonnage and poundage, which former princes had uniformly received from the bounty of Parliament, were now levied by the sole authority of the king; † that the late grants of

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 202, 203.

† These duties on exports and imports had been granted to each monarch only during his own life; but at the commencement of a

the Commons had been misapplied, and the honour as well as the safety of the nation compromised by shameful mismanagement. They found, that a direct and solemn promise made by the king to the last Parliament, that he would remove popish recusants from all offices of trust, had been eluded ; and they were enabled to present him with a long list of such persons still occupying important stations. Other instances of dubious faith in the prince were now also brought to light. The Earl of Bristol, who had resided as ambassador in Spain, and had, by his prudence and skill, brought the match with the Infanta almost to a conclusion, when it was broken off by the intrigues of Buckingham, had witnessed all the misconduct of the favourite, and had, to prevent dangerous discoveries, been silenced and confined on his arrival in England. Being now released, he delivered an explicit account of the whole transaction, from which it too plainly appeared, that Charles, even while he interchanged the most solemn oaths of friendship with the King of Spain, had already determined to violate them ; and that he had, in the

new reign, the prince had sometimes ventured to levy them till a parliament could be summoned to grant them ; and as he never pretended to do so of right, the act had passed unquestioned. The misunderstanding between Charles and his first parliament had deprived him of this grant, and he now avowedly levied the duties by his own authority.

face of Parliament, sanctioned the duke's narrative of their reception in Spain, when he knew it to be false.*

All these abuses and breaches of good faith were imputed to Buckingham. It was then, as now, the rule that ministers alone were accountable for political mismanagement; and, from the unbounded control of the duke over his sovereign, no minister was ever more justly charged with that responsibility. The Commons alleged that he had impoverished the crown by the vast gifts in money and land, which he had received for himself and his kindred; that he had accumulated into his own hands a multiplicity of high and incompatible offices; that, in deference to his father and mother-in-law, who were avowed Catholics, he had connived at the indulgence of recusants; that, through him, honours, offices, places of judicature, and ecclesiastical promotions, had been scandalously set to sale; and that, in his united capacity of admiral and general, he had left the narrow seas unguarded, delivered over vessels to assist the French court against the Protestants of Rochelle, and, by his criminal negligence and imprudence, given rise to disasters both by sea and land. These accusations they proceeded to prove in an impeachment before the House of Lords.†

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 207, 208, 238, 256.

† Ibid. p. 214, 217, 303, et seq.

The king and the favourite looked with dread on these proceedings, which they had neither the resolution to await, nor the address to elude. As soon as direct charges began to be advanced in the House of Commons against the duke, Charles, laying aside his former conciliatory language, resolved to accelerate their grants by peremptory demands, and to repress their accusations by menaces. Overlooking the right of impeachment, which the Commons had acted on, unchallenged, both in the last and the preceding reigns, he told them that he would not allow them to call in question even his meanest servant, far less his chosen minister ; he threatened to avenge himself of those members who presumed to speak disrespectfully of the duke ; and commanded them, as they wished to avoid worse consequences, without delay to declare the exact amount of the supplies which they were willing to grant. *

The Commons, to show that it was not their object to distress the king, voted him three fifteenths and three subsidies, to which they afterwards added a fourth ; but, convinced both from former experience, and the present disposition of the court, that this was the only hold which they had on its forbearance, they deferred passing the vote into a law, till their grievances should first be preferred

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 214, 215, 216, 217.

and answered.* At the same time, disregarding the menaces of the court, they proceeded to investigate the misconduct of Buckingham.†

Charles now resolved to increase the vigour of his language. He told the Commons, that he would suffer no violation of his royal rights, under colour of parliamentary liberty; that he would permit no inquiry into the conduct of his meanest servant; and that he considered their charges against the duke as attacks on his own honour. He expressed his displeasure at the scantiness of the supplies, and still more at the condition with which they were accompanied, and fixed a precise day, by which he commanded them to state, directly and finally, the amount of unconditional supplies which they purposed to grant. To make them aware that he had still more decisive measures in agitation, he added, "remember that parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution; therefore, as I find the fruits of them good or evil, they are to continue, or not to be."‡

But the resolution of Charles was unequal to the boldness of his language. Hearing that his speech had excited high indignation among the Commons, he sent Buckingham to explain away

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 221, 409.

† Ibid. p. 221.

‡ Ibid. p. 222, 223, 224, 225.

the offensive expressions, and to retract his peremptory demand of supplies by a precise day: * He afterwards, without expressing any resentment, received a remonstrance, in which they asserted, "that it hath been the ancient, constant, and undoubted right and usage of parliaments, to question and complain of all persons, of what degree soever, found grievous to the commonwealth; in abusing the power and trust committed to them by their sovereign." † So far from impeding their impeachment of the duke, Charles now, by a special message, permitted them to introduce what new matter they pleased into the charges which they had exhibited against him. ‡

Yet the prosecution was hardly commenced, when the alarm of the favourite and the violent resolves of the king returned. Two of the most active managers of the impeachment were sent to the Tower; § and Sir Dudley Carlton, the vice-chamberlain, renewed, still more explicitly, the king's former threats. "I beseech you, gentlemen," said he, "move not his majesty by trenching on his prerogatives, lest you bring him out of love with parliaments. You have heard his majesty's frequent messages to you, to put you forward in a course that will be most convenient. In

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 226.

† Ibid. p. 248.

‡ Ibid. p. 245.

§ Ibid. p. 356.

those messages he told you, that, if there were not correspondency between him and you, he should be enforced to use *new counsels*. Now, I pray you, consider what these new counsels are, and may be; I fear to declare those that I conceive. In all Christian kingdoms, you know that parliaments were in use anciently, by which they were governed in a most flourishing manner, until the monarchs began to know their own strength; and seeing the turbulent spirit of their parliaments, they at length, by little and little, began to stand upon their own prerogatives, and at last overthrew the parliaments throughout Christendom, except here only with us. And, indeed, you would count it a great misery, if you knew the subject in foreign countries as well as myself; to see them look, not like our nation, with store of flesh on their backs, but like so many ghosts, and not men; being nothing but skin and bones, with some thin cover to their nakedness, and wearing only wooden shoes on their feet; so that they cannot eat meat, or wear good clothes, but they must pay taxes to the king for it. This is a misery beyond expression, and that which yet we are free from. Let us be careful, then, to preserve the king's good opinion of parliaments, which bring this happiness to this nation, and make us envied of all others, while there is this sweetness between his majesty and his

Commons, lest we lose the repute of a free born nation, by turbulency in parliament.” *

The Commons had just reason to be alarmed at this discourse, which so plainly intimated that the national freedom could be retained only by their unlimited compliance ; that the king, rather than have his will disputed, would, like the other absolute princes of Europe, overturn the ancient constitution of his country, and reduce his people, from a flourishing condition, to the lowest ebb of wretchedness. But their indignation was further aggravated, when they saw the Duke of Buckingham, in contempt of their impeachment, ostentatiously invested with new dignities. The Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge having become vacant, the king signified his pleasure that Buckingham should be elected to this station of honour. The majority of the members yielded obedience ; and the king, in a public letter of thanks to the University, assured them that he considered an honour conferred on the duke as an obligation to himself. †

It was in vain that the king now addressed the indignant Commons, again commanding them to expedite the bill of supplies by a certain day, and threatening that he would otherwise have recourse to other resolutions. They replied by a humble

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 339.

† Ibid. p. 371, 374.

petition for the removal of Buckingham from access to the royal presence ; and proceeded, in temperate and respectful language, to draw up a more detailed remonstrance to the same effect, in which they also protested against the illegal levying of tonnage and poundage : when the king, alarmed and angry, suddenly put an end to their labours by a dissolution. *

During this eventful contest, Wentworth continued, at a distance from the scene, calmly and diligently executing the duties of his office. Although he had undertaken them with reluctance, he was determined to discharge them with fidelity ; and, in the true spirit of a philosopher, he says, “ I will withall closely and quietly attend my own private fortune, repairing and settling it with innocent hands, moderate and regulated desires, and so repose myself on the goodness of the Almighty, that doth not only divert the scourges of an adversary, but doth even convert them into health and soundness. Can there be a fairer or fuller revenge ? *Insanos feri tumultus ridere*. Is there any state or condition so safe, more to be recommended ? *Virtus vitæ tacitos beatae, rure secreto, sibi nota tandem, exigit annos*. Yet I do lament, sadly lament, the miseries of these times, being reduced to such a prostration of spirit, as we are nei-

Wentworth's
conduct as
Sheriff

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 397, 404, 405.

ther able to overcome the exulcerated disease, nor to endure a sharp prevalent remedy." *

Philosophic
resolutions.

To the last subject, which now alone seemed to interrupt his philosophic tranquillity, he again adverts, and heartily offers his prayers for the success of the oppositionists, since he was now precluded from rendering them other assistance. "For my own part, I will commit them to their active heat,

December 5.

and, according to the season of the year, fold myself up in a cold silent forbearance, apply myself cheerfully to the duties of my place, and heartily pray to God to bless Sir Francis Seymour. † For my rule, which I will not transgress, is, never to contend with the prerogative out of a parliament; nor yet to contest with a king but when I am constrained thereunto, or else make shipwreck of my integrity and peace of conscience, which I trust God will ever bless me with, and with courage too to preserve it." ‡

New over-
tures from
Bucking-
ham.

While pursuing these resolutions, so prudent amidst the distraction of the times, Wentworth received new overtures from Buckingham. Alarmed at the accusations preparing in parliament, and fearful of the general indignation, the favourite

* Wentworth to Wandesford, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 32.

† One of the members nominated sheriffs, who was now, in defiance of the displeasure of the crown, attempting to procure his reelection: *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 30.

‡ *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 33.

deemed it high time to conciliate some of those angry spirits whom his former insolence had exasperated. To Wentworth, whose vigour and influence were objects of dread, he forgot not to apply his arts ; and, having called him to a personal interview, assured him that his nomination as sheriff had taken place without his knowledge, and during his absence ; and begged that all former misunderstandings should be buried in a contract of permanent friendship. The protestations of the duke were evidently false, his proffers of amity probably insincere ; yet his necessity for the support of able men, under his present load of public reproach, opened a door to preferment, opportune and apparently certain. Wentworth, therefore, met these advances with cordiality ; and having again waited on the duke, and experienced the most obliging reception, he departed, in full satisfaction, for Yorkshire, to await, amidst his private and official avocations, the result of these favourable appearances. *

But the impetuosity and rashness of Buckingham set all calculations at defiance. Whether moved by the representations of some interested intriguer ; or confirmed in his confident schemes by the respite which he enjoyed after the dissolution of parliament ; he was accessory to a step which gave a

Deprived of
his office
as Custos
Rotulorum.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 34, 35.

new edge to the enmity of Wentworth. The office of Custos Rotulorum, though of little emolument, was attended with considerable honour; and as Wentworth had been permitted to enjoy it when out of favour at court, he had no reason to doubt of its security after his reconciliation with Buckingham. It was with no small surprise that he now received his majesty's order to resign the office to his old antagonist Sir John Savile; and still more was his resentment roused, when the warrant was presented to him before a full meeting of the county, at which, in his quality of high sheriff, he presided. He addressed the lords and gentlemen around him: he pointedly remarked that "this was a place ill chosen, a stage ill prepared, for venting such poor, vain, insulting humour." He declared himself ready to prove, at the price of his life, that he had never declined from the plain and open ways of loyalty, that he had never falsified the precious and general trust of his county, that he had never injured or overborne the meanest individual under the disguised mask of justice and favour. A little flattery and compliance at court would, he added, have rendered him secure. "The world," said he, "may well think I know the way which would have kept my place. I confess, indeed, it had been too dear a purchase, so I leave it, not conscious of any fault in myself, nor

yet acquainted with any virtue in my successor, that should occasion this removal." *

Yet Wentworth, though he vigorously repelled this public affront, did not allow his passion to silence the voice of discretion. He took precautions that this unexpected mortification should not prejudice him with the prince, whom he might hope hereafter to serve in a superior capacity. An intimacy, which he had formed with Sir Richard Weston, Chancellor of the Exchequer, furnished him with the means of executing these intentions. This man had improved the advantages of birth and fortune, which he derived from his ancestors, by a good education, and a sagacious observation of men. Having devoted his exertions to obtain preferment at court, he spent the last part of a fair estate in acquiring the acquaintance and favour of the great men in authority ; and had his attendance at length rewarded by an appointment to several embassies abroad. In these he displayed a diligence and address which soon procured him the rank of a privy counsellor, and the place of Chancellor of the Exchequer. The court was by no means popular, his patron Buckingham was pursued by a general odium, and himself, from the avowed tenets of his family, suspected of an attach-

Private advances to the king.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 36.

ment to popery.* Yet, by carefully avoiding every occasion of offence, he had the rare good fortune to be acceptable to the court, and yet not displeasing to parliament.† With Wentworth he had formed a peculiar intimacy; had laboured to accommodate his differences with the duke; and had been present at their several interviews for reconciliation.

To this friend, Wentworth now represented, by letter, the injustice which he had sustained; reminded him of the several advances of the duke; and called on him to witness that every new breach had proceeded from a new provocation on the part of his grace. "At the dissolved parliament in Oxford," said he, "you are privy how I was moved from and in behalf of the Duke of Buckingham, with promise of his good esteem and favour; you are privy that my answer was, 'I did honour the duke's person, that I would be ready to serve him in the quality of an honest man and a gentleman:' you are privy that the duke took this in good part, and sent me thanks, as for respects done him; you are privy how, during that sitting, (session,) I performed what I had professed. The

* We find it afterwards the general opinion that Weston died a Papist. None but persons of that persuasion were present at his death. *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 389.

† Clarendon, *Hist. of Reb.* Vol. I. p. 48, 49.

consequence of all this was, the making me sheriff the next winter after. It is true the duke, a little before Whitsuntide last, at Whitehall, in your presence, said it was done without his grace's knowledge; that he was then in Holland. At Whitehall, Easter term last, you brought me to the duke; his grace did before you contract (as he pleased to term it) a friendship with me, all former mistakes laid aside, forgotten. After, I went at my coming out of town, to receive his commands, to kiss his grace's hands, where I had all the good words and good usage which could be expected, which bred in me a great deal of content, a full security. Now the consequence here again is, that even yesterday I received his majesty's writ, for the discharging me of the poor place of Custos Rotulorum, which I held here. His good pleasure shall be cheerfully obeyed; yet I cannot but observe, that the reward of my long, painful, and loyal service to his majesty in that place, is thus to be cast off, without any fault laid to my charge that I hear of; and that his grace too was now in England. I have therefore troubled you with this unartificial relation, to show you the singleness of my heart, resting in all assurance justly confident, you shall never find that I have, for my own part, in a tittle transgressed from what hath passed betwixt us." *

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 34, 35.

This letter Wentworth followed up by another, in which he solicits his friend, at some favourable opportunity, to represent to his majesty the estimation in which he was held by the late king, his ardent attachment to his present sovereign, his unfeigned grief at the apprehension of his displeasure, and his eager desire to show his affection and zeal by future services.—“ Calling to mind the faithful service I had the honour to do to his majesty now with God, how graciously he vouchsafed to accept and express it openly sundry times, I enjoy with myself much comfort and contentment. On the other side, though in my breast still strongly dwell entire intentions, and by God’s goodness shall to my grave, towards his sacred majesty that now is, yet I well may apprehend the weight of his indignation, being put out of all commissions wherein I had formerly served and been trusted. This makes me sensible of my misfortune, though not conscious of any inward guilt that might occasion it ; resting infinitely ambitious, not of any new employment, but much rather to live under the smile than the frown of my sovereign. In this streight, therefore, give me leave to recommend to you the protection of my innocence, and to beseech you, at some good opportunity, to represent unto his majesty my tender and unfeigned grief for his disfavour : my fears also that I stand, before his justice and goodness, clad in the malevo-

lent interpretations, and prejudiced by the subtle insinuations of my adversaries : and lastly, my only and humble suit, that his majesty would princely deign, that my insufficiency or fault may be shown me ; to this only end, that, if insufficiency, I may know where and how to improve myself, and be better enabled to present hereafter more ripe and pleasing fruits of my labours in his service : if a fault, that I may either confess my error, and beg his pardon ; or else, which I am most confident I shall do, approve myself throughout an honest and well-affected loyal subject, with full, plain, and upright satisfaction to all that can, by the greatest malice, or undisguised truth, be objected against me.” *

The friends who were acquainted with this respectful submission of Wentworth were not a little surprised when they saw him, not many months after, boldly stand forward as the assertor of popular rights, and the opponent of the crown, in its most favourite exertions of power. But this conduct, though to them it might bear the aspect of imprudence and temerity, was dictated by a profound appreciation of the intervening circumstances.

Charles, having dissolved the Parliament, hastened to show that his threats of resorting to new

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 33.

counsels were not empty words, and that, according to the explicit menace of the vice-chamberlain, he was resolved, after the example of other European kings, to extinguish the importunate privileges of Parliament. The most urgent task was to provide money for the exigencies of the state, and various expedients were without delay put in force. The privy-council issued an order that all those duties of tonnage and poundage on exports and imports, which had hitherto required a grant from Parliament, should now be paid on a demand from the king.* The Commons, we have seen, had resolved, if not prevented by a dissolution, to grant four subsidies and three fifteenths; this money it was resolved to levy partly by privy seals, and partly in the form of a benevolence; the people being called on to consider the contribution as "merely a free gift from the subject to the sovereign."† Popish recusants had hitherto been subjected to heavy penalties and legal disabilities: these were now compounded for a fine to the exchequer.‡ The nobility were requested, by particular messages from the king, to set an example to the rest of his subjects, by the liberality of their contributions.§ As the submission of the city of London was also a precedent of much

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 413. † Ibid. p. 416.

‡ Ibid. p. 413, 414. § Ibid. p. 416.

importance, it was commanded to advance his majesty a loan of a hundred thousand pounds; and when the magistrates endeavoured to excuse themselves from this partial imposition, they were desired to comply without delay, or to abide the consequences of those counsels which it became a king to frame on extreme and important occasions.* To equip a fleet with the least trouble and delay, each sea-port was commanded to furnish a certain number of ships, specified by the privy-council; and, with the assistance of the neighbouring counties, to furnish them with men, arms, ammunition, and all manner of sea stores. And when some ports, alarmed at this novel and arbitrary imposition, endeavoured to avert it by petitions, they were informed, "that state occasions are not to be guided by ordinary precedents;" and warned not to obstruct the demand "by petitions and pleadings, which tend to the danger of the commonwealth, and are not to be received."†

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 415.

† Ibid. p. 415. Mr Hume (Vol. VI. p. 225, 8vo edit.) represents this as "a taxation once imposed by Elizabeth:" but nothing could be more unlike than the two cases. When the mighty preparations for the Armada were announced, all ranks of men in England, alarmed for whatever they held dear, hastened to offer their persons and property for the defence of their country. Many noblemen and gentlemen, at their own private expence, equipped vessels and served on board of them in person; and the maritime towns vied with each other in furnishing ships for the public ser-

The court
demands a
general loan.

While the minds of men were thrown into a ferment by these circumstances, the irregular exactions imposed by royal authority were too slowly extorted from an unwilling people, to answer the exigencies of the government. Charles, therefore, boldly ventured to impose, by his own mandates, those general and regular contributions, which parliament alone had, for ages, been accounted competent to bestow.* By a royal decree, he

vice. It was at this juncture that Elizabeth, by an order of the privy-council, regulated the number of vessels which it would be requisite for each sea-port to furnish towards the common defence: but so far did the zeal of the people outrun even the apprehended necessities of government, that several sea-ports, and, among the rest, London, sent double the number of vessels which the queen had specified. But when this contribution in kind was required by Charles, no such emergency existed: instead of regulating the overflowing liberality of his subjects, he obtained his supplies by compulsion: and both the court and people looked on the imposition as a method of supplying the wants of government, without having recourse to the ancient forms of the constitution.

* It must strike every reader, on perusing the original records of that period, that neither Charles nor his courtiers denied that these arbitrary impositions were infringements of the popular rights. Even while enforcing the measure here alluded to, Charles thought it expedient to soothe the minds of men by a declaration, stating, "that the urgency of the occasion would not give leave to the calling of a parliament; but assuring the people, that this way should not be made a precedent for the time to come, to charge them or their posterity, to the prejudice of their *just and ancient liberties enjoyed under his most noble ancestors.*" Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 418. Charles and his courtiers considered these measures as a part of his *new counsels*; to defend them on the ground of precedent, was the attempt of a later age.

commanded a general contribution to be levied over all the kingdom. It bore the less invidious name of a loan ; but that no one might be ignorant of its real nature and intention, the assessment was ordered to be made according to the forms and proportion of a subsidy.* Could the people be brought to give peaceably one subsidy without the intervention of parliament, habit, it was thought, would soon reconcile them to the new system, and free the crown from its trammels for ever. Strenuous precautions were taken to ensure the success of the measure : commissioners sworn to secrecy were instructed in the art of mingling authority with example, and persuasion with menace : neither excuse nor remonstrance were to be admitted, nor was resistance to be allowed to gain strength from delay and reflection.†

These proceedings spread universal consternation among all ranks of men. They saw the only bond by which they held their ancient liberties about to be rent asunder, and their boasted constitution assimilated to the other absolute governments of Europe.‡ The spirit of resistance dif-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 418. † Ibid. p. 418, 419.

‡ The following extract from Archbishop Abbot's Narrative strongly represents the general sentiments at that period : " For the matter of the loan, I knew not a long time what to make of it. I saw, on the one side, the king's necessity for money, and especially it being resolved that the war should be pursued ; and on

fused itself throughout every condition ; and the loan was refused by needy mechanics as well as by men distinguished for their rank and fortune.

Disuaded
by his
friends.

With these opposers of the court, his friends, with grief and surprise, saw Wentworth take a decided part. They conjured him to abandon a resolution by which he would forfeit all pretensions to discretion : they represented the dangers which his health would incur from the rigours of a prison, and the ruin which must overwhelm all his ambi-

the other side I could not forget, that in the parliament great sums were offered, if the petitions of the Commons might be hearkened unto. It ran still in my mind, that *the old and usual way was best* ; that, in kingdoms, the harmony was sweetest where the prince and the people tuned well together. It ran in my mind, that this *new device* for money could not long hold out ; that then we must return into the highway, whither it were best to retire ourselves betimes, the shortest errors being the best. At the opening of the commission for the loan, I was sent for from Croyden. It seemed to me a *strange thing* ; but I was told, that, howsoever it showed, the king would have it so, there was no speaking against it. I have not heard, that men throughout the kingdom should lend money against their will ; I knew not what to make of it. But when I saw the instructions, that the refusers should be sent away for soldiers to the King of Denmark, I began to remember Urias, that was set in the fore-front of the battle ; and, to speak truth, I durst not be tender in it. And when afterwards I saw that men were to be put to their oath, with whom they had conference, and whether any did dissuade them, and yet further beheld that divers were to be imprisoned, *I thought this was somewhat a new world.*" See the Archbishop's Narrative in Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 454.

tious hopes.* He deceived himself, they said, if he considered this resistance as revenging his quarrel on the duke; that his majesty had adopted the measure as peculiarly his own; that Buckingham, alarmed at the general discontent, had even endeavoured to dissuade him from persevering in it, but had the mortification to receive an absolute denial; for, said the king, "my honour is engaged, and the eyes of the kingdom are upon me."† They informed him that his majesty had, on this occasion, avowedly taken the punishment of the refractory into his own hands. "No one," said his brother-in-law, Lord Clifford, "will henceforth venture to move the king in your favour; for his heart is so inflamed in this business, that he vows a perpetual remembrance, as well as a present punishment."‡

But the resistance of Wentworth was prompted by very substantial reasons. If he had a spark of patriotism or generosity in his bosom, this was the season to stand forth in defence of the expiring liberties of his country: and even if ambition were, as his friends seem to have imagined, the predominant principle of his mind, the course which he pursued was conformable to the most deliberate dictates of reflection. Buckingham, he

Reasons for
his conduct.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 37, 38, 39.

† Ibid. p. 38. ‡ Ibid.

knew, had long cherished animosity towards him ; * and, from the character of his Grace, he had no reason to expect any disinterested patronage. Yet, by the force of his parliamentary eloquence, he had extorted from the fears of the minister what he could never have obtained from his liberality ; he had compelled him to make repeated advances, and at least to counterfeit the appearances of friendship. But if the new system of raising supplies should pass into an established practice ; if parliaments, rendered unnecessary, should cease to be assembled, no scope would be afforded for the display of talent, no means left for awing the insolent favourite. No longer trembling under the terrors of an impeachment, Buckingham would continue with impunity to wound his opponents, and to lavish the offices and honours of the state among his own creatures.

Imprisoned
May 1627.

Whether animated by patriotism, or prompted by ambition, Wentworth refused to pay the demanded contribution ; and having, before the privy-council, persisted in justifying his conduct, he was first thrown into prison, and afterwards, as a mitigated punishment, sent to Dartford in Kent,

* So unacceptable was Wentworth at this time to Buckingham, that even an intimacy with him was sometimes prejudicial to his friends. Archbishop Abbot mentions, among the causes of his sequestration, the displeasure of the duke at his intercourse with Wentworth. See his Narrative in Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 451.

where he was prohibited from going above two miles from the town. *

This restraint was not of long continuance. The resistance of the people increased with the necessities of the crown ; and Charles, if he had the resolution, found he wanted the power, to give efficacy to his new counsels. The proposed system of government, difficult under any circumstances, was impracticable under the course which he pursued. Injudicious innovations, from the ruling party in the church, excited general discontent. †

* Radcliffe's Essay. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 39.

† Dr Sibthorp and Dr Manwaring, in their pulpit orations for the advancement of the loan. The former preached a sermon, entitled *Apostolical Obedience*. It was dedicated to the king, and licensed by Laud, Bishop of London ; for the Archbishop of Canterbury, having refused to give it this sanction, fell under the high displeasure of the court, and was sequestered from his functions. Among other doctrines to the same purport, Sibthorp here maintained, that, " if princes command any thing which subjects may not perform, because it is against the laws of God, or of nature, or impossible ; yet subjects are bound to undergo the punishment, without either resisting, or railing, or reviling, and so to yield a passive obedience where they cannot exhibit an active one. I know no other case," continued he, " but one of those three, wherein a subject may excuse himself with passive obedience." Dr Manwaring, in sermons preached before the king and court at Whitehall, asserted, " that the king is not bound to observe the laws of the realm concerning the subject's rights and liberties, but that his royal will and command in imposing loans and taxes, without common consent in parliament, doth oblige the subject's conscience, upon pain of eternal damnation. That those who refused to pay

A proclamation by the king, prohibiting the promulgation of any but orthodox doctrines, was construed into a discouragement of the creed of Luther, and a recommendation of that of Arminius.* The primate of England, venerable for his years and moderation, was sequestered, by a royal man-

this loan offended against the law of God, and the king's supreme authority, and became guilty of impiety, disloyalty, and rebellion. That the authority of parliament is not necessary for the raising of aids and subsidies; and that the slow proceedings of such great assemblies were not fitted for the supply of the state's urgent necessities, but would rather produce sundry impediments to the just designs of princes." Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 422, 423. Mr Hume, in alluding to these sermons, observes, that "there is nothing which tends more to excuse, if not justify, the extreme rigour of the Commons towards Charles, than his open avowal and encouragement of such general principles as were altogether incompatible with a limited government."

* The prelates most devoted to the court had adopted the tenets, with respect to predestination and certain other points of theology, which had been propagated by Arminius; and these, however rational, were a novelty in the church of England, which, along with other Protestant countries, had, at the Reformation, embraced the doctrine of Luther and Calvin. To that doctrine the great body of the nation, and, among the rest, the puritans, still firmly adhered; and the contentions between the supporters of the old, and the propagators of the new doctrines, divided private societies, and resounded from the pulpit. The puritans (under which title the court comprised almost all assertors of civil or religious liberty) were farther alarmed, when they saw Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, and Lord Keeper of England, removed from his office, and prosecuted in the Star Chamber, because he would not concur in an odious persecution against them. Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 412, 413, 421.

date, from his authority, because he refused his sanction to discourses recommending passive obedience. Judges who refused to pervert justice were displaced for the obsequious creatures of the crown; and decisions contrary to positive law were given against those who resisted arbitrary exactions. Men whose rank and fortune commanded respect were indeed only committed to prison, without benefit of the Habeas Corpus Act, or consigned to counties remote from their properties; but this lenity was attributed to fear, and not to a sense of justice, when the refractory among the lower orders were, without regard to their destitute families, impressed, some into the navy, others into the land forces.* Various districts were put under martial law: and bands of soldiers were dispersed over the country, and arbitrarily quartered on the inhabitants.†

Amidst the general ferment thus excited, the public were surprised to see the court plunge itself into another unprovoked war. The Duke of Buckingham having, during an embassy to France, been thwarted in an unjustifiable affair of gallantry, determined to revenge his disappointment by open hostilities;‡ and Charles had the weakness to con-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 422.

† Ibid. p. 419, 420. Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, Vol. I. p. 41.

‡ Ibid. p. 38.

cur in the insolent fury of the favourite. The French servants of the young queen were dismissed,* herself treated with disrespect,† and when the court of France still expressed its indignation only by remonstrances, Buckingham took effectual means to give activity to its resentment, by causing some ships of that nation to be seized and carried into English ports. The duke having now resolved to show his prowess by undertaking an expedition in person, the treasury was drained, and large debts incurred, to furnish him with a suitable armament. His object was the relief of Rochelle, which he had so lately assisted to reduce; but so ill were his measures concerted, that he found it necessary to disembark on the adjacent Isle of Rhé. Here, having suffered his army to be baffled

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 424.

† The resignation with which Charles bore the insults and caprices of a man who had once threatened to strike him, and usually treated him with a very rude familiarity, might be ascribed to a disposition too mild to take offence, or too lenient to resent indignities. But we can scarcely reconcile to generosity or to manhood the rudeness with which he suffered this intimation to treat his young and beautiful queen. One day, when Buckingham unjustly apprehended that she had shown some disrespect to his mother, in not going to her house at an appointed hour, a visit which was prevented by mere accident, he came into her chamber in much passion, and, after some rude expostulations, told her, "*she should repent it.*" When her majesty answered with some spirit, he insolently replied, "*that there had been queens in England who had lost their heads.*" Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 39.

by an inferior enemy, and to be at length overtaken in a situation where valour was of no avail, he narrowly escaped in the rout which followed, and hastening on board the ships, left his men to follow their general as they could. *

From one end of the kingdom to the other, the news of this overthrow spread grief and consternation. In the confusion of the rout, numbers of all ranks had been crushed to death, or drowned without the agency of an enemy. Scarcely a noble family but had to lament the death of a son, a brother, or a kinsman; nor was their grief allayed by the consolation, that their relatives had fallen by honourable wounds. The fleet and the army broke out into mutinies; and the government, overwhelmed with its difficulties, was unable to pay their arrears. †

In this desperate condition, the court saw no alternative but to lay aside, for the present, its new

* The account given by Mr Hume of Buckingham's conduct on this occasion is different. He states that the duke "was the last of the army that embarked," and that he brought back with him to England at least "the vulgar praise of courage and personal bravery." Clarendon, who was a great admirer of his grace, also celebrates his courage on this occasion. The account given in the text is taken from a letter of the Honourable Denzil Hollis, afterwards Lord Hollis, to his brother-in-law, Wentworth, and inserted in Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 42. Hollis says he had his information from officers of rank who served in the expedition.

† Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 40, 41. Rushworth, Vol. I. 423.

Released. counsels, so inauspiciously begun, and to resume the old course till a more favourable opportunity. By the advice of Sir Robert Cotton, a member of the privy-council, writs were issued for a new parliament; and the severities, hitherto practised against the popular party, were superseded by gracious attempts at conciliation.* To break the tide of indignation, which now flowed against Buckingham, this happy change was publicly ascribed to his advice and earnest intercession with the king.† The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Lincoln, the Earl of Bristol, so lately the objects of punishment, were now summoned, with other peers of their rank, to resume their seats in the parliament and the council.‡ The gentlemen who remained confined to prisons and distant counties, for refusing the general loan, were now freed from restraint; and were immediately returned by the people to the House of Commons, as the most strenuous assertors of their liberties.§ Among the rest, Wentworth, liberated from his confinement at Dartford, was triumphantly re-elected for the county of York.||

In Parliament, 1628.

But these conciliatory measures formed only part of a plan, of which the grand characteristics were menace and terror. Seven days after the

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 472. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. p. 474.

§ Ibid. p. 472.

|| Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 48.

writs for this assembly were issued, all the principal officers of the crown were, by a commission under the great seal, authorized and commanded to devise the best and speediest means of raising supplies for the exigencies of the state: and in this instrument they were reminded, that "form and circumstance must be dispensed with, rather than the substance be lost and hazarded." * The address of the king to the houses was in perfect correspondence with this language. Without mentioning their grievances, or holding out any hope of redress, he shortly told them, "That common danger was the cause of this parliament, and supply the chief end of it: wherefore," said he, "if you should not do your duties, in contributing what the state at this time needs, I must, in discharge of my conscience, use those other means, which God hath put into my hands, to save that, which the follies of particular men may otherwise hazard to lose. Take not this as a threat," continued his majesty, "for I scorn to threaten any but my equals; but as an admonition from him that, both out of nature and duty, hath most care of your preservation and prosperity." † The Lord Keeper, enlarging, by his majesty's direction, on the same topics, was yet more explicit. "This way," said he, "of parliamentary supplies, his ma-

March 17,
1628.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 474, 614. † Ibid. p. 476, 477.

jesty hath chosen, as he told you, not as the only way, but as the fittest ; not as destitute of others, but as most agreeable to the goodness of his own most gracious disposition, and to the desire and weal of his people. If this be deferred, necessity and the sword of the enemy make way for the others. Remember his majesty's admonition,* added he emphatically, " I say, remember it." *

To provide against counsels so undisguisedly displayed, the Commons proceeded with the greatest temper and firmness. Too dignified to be moved by fear, and too independent to be swayed by the hopes of favour, they comprised the persons most distinguished in the nation for talents and influence ; and their collective property was computed to be equal to three times that of the House of Peers. The grievances of which they had to complain, and which were neither chimerical nor longer supportable, gave rise to many energetic and eloquent harangues ; and Wentworth, among others, maintained that these arbitrary measures, the baneful effects of evil counsellors, were alike pernicious to the sovereign and the subject :

Speech for
popular
rights.

" Surely," said he, " these illegal ways are punishments and marks of indignation. The raising of loans strengthened by commission, with unheard-of instructions and oaths, the billeting of soldiers

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 479.

by the lieutenants and their deputies, have been as if they could have persuaded mankind, that the right of empires had been to take away by strong hands; and they have endeavoured, as far as possible for them, to do it. This hath not been done by the king, (under the pleasing shade of whose crown I hope we shall ever gather the fruits of justice,) but by projectors who have extended the prerogative of the king beyond the just symmetry, which maketh a sweet harmony of the whole. They have brought the crown into greater want than ever by anticipating the revenues; they have introduced a privy-council, ravishing, at once, the spheres of all ancient government; destroying all liberty; imprisoning us without bail or bond. They have taken from us—what shall I say? Indeed, what have they left us? By tearing up the roots of all property, they have taken from us every means of supplying the king, and of ingratiating ourselves by voluntary proofs of our duty and attachment.

“ To the making whole all these breaches, I shall apply myself; and to all these diseases, shall propound a remedy. By one and the same thing have the people been hurt, and by the same must they be cured. We must vindicate—what? new things? No!—*our ancient, legal, and vital liberties*; by reinforcing the laws enacted by our ancestors; by setting such a seal on them as no licentious spirit shall hereafter dare to infringe. And

shall we fear, by this proceeding, to put an end to parliament? No; our desires are modest and just, and equally for the interest of the king and the people. If we enjoy not these rights, it will be impossible for us to relieve him." * . . .

Amidst these discussions, the king having sent to the Commons some specific propositions for supply, it was debated whether they or the redress of grievances should first be taken into consideration. † Wentworth strongly pressed that their grants should be preceded by redress. "I cannot," said he, "forget that duty I owe to my country: unless we be secured in our liberties, we cannot give." ‡ Yet after a short delay, the house, at the instance especially of Mr Pym, unanimously voted a supply of five subsidies to his majesty. §

When informed of this unexpected liberality, Charles was sensibly affected. || He had accustomed himself to look on the Commons as the inveterate enemies of his power, as a clog on the motions of his government. Yet amidst the loudest complaints of arbitrary measures, and their most bitter invectives against his obnoxious ministers, they had uniformly spoken of himself, not only with respect and loyalty, but with affection and esteem;

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 500. Franklyn, p. 343.

† Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 518. ‡ Ibid. p. 521.

§ Ibid. p. 525. || Ibid.

and, though exasperated by his menaces, they had now hastened to remove those necessities which all his own authority had failed to relieve. When the gracious reception which he gave to this instance of their duty was reported to them, they showed a jealousy of his honour beyond all his servile courtiers ; and expressed their disappointment that the thanks of the Duke of Buckingham should be coupled with the approbation of their sovereign. *

All those arbitrary invasions of persons and property, which now excited complaint, were expressly guarded against by many ancient statutes, never repealed, though often infringed by tyrannical monarchs. The Commons resolved, therefore, merely to draw up a declaration reciting the substance of those existing laws, and hence denominated a Petition of Right. By procuring his majesty's explicit sanction to such a declaration, they would both point out to him the determinate constitutional limits of his authority ; and secure his observance of them for the future, if any laws were to be binding, or any faith placed in the word of a king.

Promotes
the Petition
of Right.

At these resolutions, which opposed fresh barriers to his new plan of government, Charles was alarmed. The statutes recounted in this Petition of Right had been enacted at distant periods ; and

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 526.

though never deemed obsolete, yet recent practice might be successfully opposed to antiquated records. If he gave an express sanction to these claims of the subject, all the advantage, which he derived from their distant origin would be annihilated: nor could he afterwards impose any arbitrary exaction, or punish the refractory, without incurring the charge of a direct violation of faith. As it was inconvenient, however, to interrupt the proceedings of the Commons by a prorogation or dissolution, since the vote for five subsidies had not yet passed into a law; he endeavoured to divert their attention by urging the necessity of instant supplies, by threatening a speedy termination to the session, and by giving his royal word that he would trench on none of their privileges which did not interfere with his prerogative.

But the more reluctance his majesty discovered to sanction their petition, the more necessary did it appear to insist on his compliance. If no intention existed to infringe the ancient statutes, why refuse to renew them? Were all the unauthorized stretches of royal authority to be considered as branches of the prerogative? By such arguments, Wentworth, who now stood forward as one of the most active assertors of the public rights, prevailed on the house to resolve "that grievances and supply should go hand in hand, and the latter, in no case, precede

the former." * When some proposed to rest satisfied with the king's assurances of future adherence to law, without pressing the petition of right, he strenuously opposed this dangerous remission: "There hath been," said he, "a public violation of the laws by his majesty's ministers; and nothing shall satisfy me but a public amends. Our desire to vindicate the subjects' rights exceeds not what is laid down in former laws, with some modest provision for instruction and performance." † When the Lords proposed to add to the petition a saving clause, importing that all their pretensions for liberty still left entire the claims of the sovereign power; Wentworth exclaimed against the evasion. "If we do admit of this addition," said he, "we shall leave the subject in a worse state than we found him. Let us leave all power to his majesty to bring malefactors to legal punishment; but our laws are not acquainted with *sovereign power*. We desire no new thing, nor do we offer to trench on his majesty's prerogative; but we may not recede from this petition, either in whole or in part." ‡

It was the peculiar felicity of Elizabeth, that she had the art to concede an untenable point, with the same apparent ease and good humour, as if she had

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 538.

† Ibid. p. 554.

‡ Ibid. p. 563.

yielded to no necessity. It was the misfortune of Charles, that his compliance, even when unavoidable, was so ungracious and reluctant, as to occasion almost as much discontent as a refusal. He expressed his assent to the petition of right, but in words so unusual and evasive, that the Commons felt only an increase of their agitation; nor was it till he was alarmed by their reiterated remonstrances against abuses, and discovered their determination not to proceed with the bill of supplies, that he at length sanctioned the petition in the usual form.* Yet the Commons repaid this long delayed concession by immediately passing the bill of supplies, and by dissolving all the committees which they had appointed to investigate the abuses of government. They now proceeded to represent those existing grievances, which were particularly

* Mr Hume says, "It may be affirmed, without any exaggeration, that the king's assent to the petition of right produced such a change in the government, as was almost equivalent to a revolution; and by circumscribing, in so many articles, the royal prerogative, gave additional security to the liberties of the subject." What a pity he should not have mentioned some of the novelties which he imagined he had discovered in this petition: if there exist any such, they certainly escaped both the parliament and the king. The Lords and Commons professed that the petition was merely the substance of certain ancient statutes, nor was this allegation ever called in question by the court. The ancient statutes alluded to are either mentioned in the preamble, or cited in the margin. See the petition in Rushworth's Collections, Vol. I. p. 388.

guarded against by the petition of right; and to prosecute their charges against the Duke of Buckingham, as the chief author of pernicious counsels. But in passing the bill of supplies, they had for the present given up all hold on the forbearance of the crown. Alarmed at the danger of his favourite, and hearing that the Commons were preparing a remonstrance against tonnage and poundage, which constituted so large a portion of his revenue, but which, till granted by act of Parliament, fell clearly under the head of illegal exactions, Charles suddenly appeared in Parliament, and ended the session by prorogation. *

June 26,
1628.

Overtures
from the
Court.

Although the court thus procured a temporary respite, the few months of recess were speedily to elapse, and the necessities of the state rendered the return of the evil inevitable. The preparations requisite to maintain the war against the French and Spaniards, would soon exhaust the supplies which had been granted, and the Commons would doubtless recommence their labours where they had been forcibly interrupted. To break the force of opposition by violently removing the more active members, had already been found a vain attempt; it was now more wisely resolved to substitute promises for threats; and, by the numerous allurements in the power of the sovereign, to convert some for-

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 631.

ward patriots into champions of the prerogative. In these circumstances, no one more attracted their attention than Wentworth. He had already shown a willingness to engage in the service of the court, and had repaid its neglect by a bold, keen, and successful opposition. If he had displayed a decided animosity to Buckingham, it was by no means gratuitous, but had been amply purchased by the affronts with which the favourite had repaid his friendly assurances; and that animosity which made his assistance less acceptable to the duke, also rendered his opposition more formidable. All these considerations in favour of Wentworth were strengthened by the good offices of his friend Weston, who had lately been raised to the office of Lord High Treasurer; and who now repaid the confidence of his friend by a zealous patronage. But it was not by empty overtures, or flattering professions of the favourite, that Wentworth, already deceived, was to be won from a party that yielded him honour by its esteem, and authority by its support. To the promise of an immediate place in the peerage, with the title of baron, the court added an assurance of speedy advancement to a higher rank, and to the presidency of the council of York.

Accepted by
him.

To these allurements Wentworth was by no means insensible. Early introduced into courts, he had been accustomed to witness the slavish submission ever paid to titles, to power, and to royal

favour, however abused, however unmerited. A profuse distribution of honours had, of late years, much diminished the estimation of nobility; yet, when coupled with authority, and the smiles of the sovereign, they still possessed charms to stimulate the ambitious. The presidency of the council of York held forth yet more powerful temptations. It conferred on him an authority almost absolute over the northern counties, over his former equals, over those adversaries who had hitherto harassed and thwarted him.

The favourable reception given by Wentworth to the overtures of the court was followed by farther acts of royal condescension. His friend and confident Wandesford, though lately distinguished by the violence of his opposition, and employed by the Commons in framing the articles of impeachment against Buckingham, * was also received into favour. The powers of the northern presidency, already beyond the limits of a legal jurisdiction, were further enlarged, when consigned to their new possessor. If his ambition was thus gratified, his vanity was not less powerfully assailed by the patent of barony, in which a claim he advanced to an alliance with the blood royal, through Margaret grandmother to Henry the Seventh, was ostentatiously acknowledged, and displayed as a ground

A Peer and
President of
the Council
of York.

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 214, 352.

for his new honours. These favours, thus simultaneously showered on him, seem to have produced all the desired impression, and to have called forth his warmest expressions of exultation and gratitude. "You tell me," writes his friend Wandesford, "that God hath blessed you much in these late proceedings." *

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 49. Unfortunately for the memory of Wentworth, his admirers, anxious to render him more than man, have abandoned the plea which humanity affords to palliate his defects; and, by attempting to violate the truth of history, have exposed his conduct to additional odium. The author of the dedication to his letters, who has in this instance been followed by all his professed advocates, has undertaken to show that Wentworth was, in fact, guilty of no inconsistency. "Sir Edward Coke," says that author, "might have his particular disgust, Sir John Elliot his warmth, Mr Selden his prejudices to the bishops and clergy, and others farther designs on the constitution itself, which might cause them to carry on their opposition. But Sir Thomas Wentworth, who was a true friend to episcopal government of the church, and to a limited monarchy in the state, could have no reason, *when the petition of right was granted*, to refuse to bear his share of toils and pains in the service of the public, or to withstand the offers of those honours." This unfortunate plea only serves to fix our attention on some of the most questionable parts of Wentworth's conduct. His new honours had not yet been worn, when the petition of right was already violated; the very office which he accepted, and still more the new powers with which he was entrusted, could not be exercised without its farther violation; and we shall have too often to recount his active invasion of those very rights which the petition was formed to secure. Mr Hume, a far more dexterous advocate, while he strives to leave on the minds of his readers the most favourable impression of this statesman, obviates suspi-

To these grounds of exultation, there existed a great drawback in the capricious temper of Buckingham. Though an apparent reconciliation had taken place between them, yet Wentworth had no reason to hope for the good will, or even the permanent forbearance, of the favourite. The feelings of his Grace had indeed been soothed by the previous elevation to the peerage of Sir John Savile, the ancient and implacable antagonist of Wentworth; still, however, there were old misunderstandings, which Buckingham was not of a temper to forget, or to leave unresented.* But from these apprehensions the friends of Wentworth were unexpectedly relieved by the hand of a gloomy fanatic, who had brought himself to look on Buckingham as the great enemy of his country, and to regard this as a sufficient justification for the never justifiable crime of assassination.†

Death of
Buckingham,
August 23,
1628.

But there still remained an enemy more formidable, and not less irritated, than Buckingham. The sudden defection of Wentworth from his par-

cion, in this instance, by a frank acknowledgment of the truth. "His fidelity to the king," says this historian, "was unshaken; but as he now employed all his counsels to support the prerogative which he had formerly bent all his powers to diminish, his virtue seems not to have been entirely pure, but to have been susceptible of strong impressions from private interest and ambition."

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 49.

† Ibid. p. 27.

ty excited astonishment among all men; * and, when conjoined with some invidious circumstances, changed the general applause which he had hitherto enjoyed into reproach and menaces. His affectation of an alliance to the blood-royal excited ridicule: his desertion of a cause, for which he had ardently contended; his adoption of principles, which he had strenuously opposed; his reconciliation with Buckingham, whom he had branded as a traitor to his king and country; with his acceptance of an office, whose existence was a violation both of the common and statute laws of the realm; were regarded with resentment and indignation.

January 26,
1628.

On reassembling after the prorogation, the parliament found, to their mortification, that their former labours had only provoked an increase of abuses. They discovered that, to the printed copies of the petition of right, the evasive, and not the satisfactory reply of the king, had, by royal authority, been appended: † that all the clergy whom they had prosecuted for promulgating the doctrines of despotism, and innovations in religion, had received his majesty's pardon: ‡ that one of these, Montague, had been promoted to the see of Chichester: § that another, Manwaring, in contempt of a sentence by the House of Peers, had been re-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 47. *Epistolæ Hoellianæ*, xxxiv.

† *Rushworth*, Vol. I. p. 643. ‡ *Ibid.* p. 653. § *Ibid.* p. 638.

stored to his ecclesiastical functions, and rewarded with some lucrative benefices : * that, in direct violation of the petition of right, the king had, of his sole authority, levied imposts on exports and imports : † and that the merchants who refused to pay these arbitrary exactions had been punished with the imprisonment of their persons, and the seizure of their goods. ‡

Against these invasions of the petition of right, his majesty told the Commons that their remedy was short ; that, by passing an act confirming to him the duties which he had levied by his own authority, all grounds of complaint would be removed ; and that, on this condition, he waved the claim of right, and would receive these taxes as their grant. § The Commons expressed no unwillingness to concede these duties ; but they thought it reasonable that the king, after having so directly violated the sanction which he had given to the petition of right, should first return the goods illegally seized, and stop the prosecutions which the attorney-general had commenced against the owners. || Unless this were done, a future monarch might assert, that they had only given what they had no right to withhold ; that their office was to confirm, not to question the levying of these duties ; and that the

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 635.

† Ibid. p. 689.

‡ Ibid. p. 641, 642.

§ Ibid. p. 644.

|| Ibid. p. 654.

petition of right was of no avail in opposition to the claims of the sovereign. But Charles, far from temporising, persisted, in the face of parliament, to levy the disputed imposts, to seize the goods of the refractory, and to institute prosecutions against them. * When some loyal persons, anxious to prevent the breach so rapidly approaching, endeavoured to represent these violent proceedings as the unauthorized acts of the crown officers, Charles had the spirit or temerity to disclaim the subterfuge, to avow that his officers acted by his express commands; and to declare, that any reprehension of them he should consider as a direct attack on himself. † The Commons, alarmed at these pretensions, began to deplore the renewed danger of their liberties; to lament that, though Buckingham was no more, his counsels still survived; and that the Lord Treasurer Weston, now chief minister, zealously trod in the steps of his predecessor. ‡ But to these complaints his majesty put an end, by an adjournment so sudden, that the Commons were enabled to draw up a remonstrance against tonnage and poundage, only by shutting their door against the king's messenger, and forcibly retaining the speaker in the chair. § A few days after, parliament was dissolved with marks of studied neglect; ||

* Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 653, 654. † Ibid. p. 659. King's
 declaration. ‡ Ibid. p. 659. § Ibid. p. 660. || Ibid.

the king, in his parting speech, branded the more active members with the appellation of *vipers*, and even committed several of them to prison. *

March 10,
1629.

Freed, by this angry dissolution, from the hostility of his former associates, Wentworth could now repay the bounty of his sovereign, by a zealous support of his favourite plan of government. The council of York, or of the North, was peculiarly suited to the genius of an absolute monarchy. The forms of administering justice had been the same in the four northern counties, as in the rest of England, till the thirty-first year of Henry VIII. (1541;) when an insurrection, attended with much bloodshed and disorder, induced that monarch to grant a commission of Oyer and Terminer to the Archbishop of York, with some lawyers and gentlemen of that county, for the purpose of investigating the grounds of the outrages, and bringing the malefactors to punishment. † The good effects of the commission, in restoring tranquillity, caused it to be prolonged; and on the reappearance of commotions in those quarters, it was, in succeed-

Conduct as
President of
the Council
of York.

* They were detained many years in prison, because they refused to pay large fines and make a submission. Sir John Elliot died in confinement.

† The jurisdiction of this commission extended over the counties of York, Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, the bishopric of Durham, the cities of York, Hull, and Newcastle-on-Tyne. Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 162.

ing times, frequently renewed. A permanent abuse gradually arose out of a simple expedient. Elizabeth, and after her James, found it convenient to alter the tenor of the commission, to increase the sphere of its jurisdiction, and to augment its circumscribed legal authority by certain discretionary powers. And to such an ascendancy was this court raised, by the enlarged instructions granted to Wentworth, that the council at York now engrossed the whole jurisdiction of the four northern counties, and embraced the five great courts of common law, the Chancery, and the exorbitant authority of the Star Chamber.* Yet Wentworth still felt his authority too circumscribed, and twice applied for an enlargement of its boundaries.†

The vast power thus committed to his hands, Wentworth successfully employed in the cause of the crown. Abandoning all his former recreations, and devoting himself wholly to business, he speedily reformed what the remissness of his predecessor had deranged. He caused the militia to be embodied and disciplined, and by vigorously enforcing the fines on recusants, the compositions for knighthood, and the other exactions imposed by

* See the speech of Mr Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, in Rushworth's Collections, Vol. II. p. 162. Also *ibid.* p. 158.

† Clarendon's Hist. of the Rebellion, Vol. I. p. 239, 240.

government, he quickly succeeded in raising the revenue of the king, within his jurisdiction, to four or five times its former amount. *

There seems little ground for the charge, afterwards preferred against him, that he had exceeded the bounds of his commission ; since it would be difficult to assign any limits to his authority. We find him represented by the popish recusants as proceeding against them “ with extreme rigour, valuing the goods and lands of the poorest at the value in the market or rather above the value ; and refusing to accept of any other terms, to admit them to a composition. † This complaint, however, was disbelieved by the Treasurer Weston, to whom it was addressed ; ‡ and the conduct of Wentworth, in regard to recusants, received the unqualified approbation of a court by no means inclined to treat them with rigour. § It was with more justice that he was accused of exceeding the limits of his jurisdiction, when he caused a person to be arrested in London for offences against his court ; and refused to regard the prohibitions of the judges. || These and other irregularities were sanctioned by government ; but it was impossible to justify either his procur-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 90. He states that he had raised the revenue from L. 2000 to L. 9500 a-year.

† *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 52. ‡ *Ibid.* § *Ibid.* p. 81.

|| *Rushworth*, Vol. II. p. 159, 160.

ing or exercising a commission, that, in the words of Clarendon, "placed the northern counties entirely beyond the protection of the common law; that included fifty-eight instructions, of which scarcely one did not exceed or directly violate the common law; and that, by its natural operation, had almost overwhelmed the country under the sea of arbitrary power, and involved the people in a labyrinth of distemper, oppression, and poverty." *

The unpopularity incurred by Wentworth in the discharge of this office proceeded chiefly from two causes—from his sudden change of party, and from a natural vehemence of temper which new circumstances rendered more conspicuous. If, in his early youth, he had betrayed some indications of a disposition impetuous, overbearing, and vindictive; these turbulent symptoms, soothed by the tranquillity of a private station, and meeting with but trivial excitements, had yielded to the influence of a sound and vigorous judgment. But now, exasperated by the censure of opponents, elevated by the applause of friends, and stimulated by the possession of uncontrolled power; the passions of Wentworth at times burst forth with unexpected violence. He procured respect for his power

* See Lord Clarendon's Report in Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 162, 163, 164.

by causing it to be felt, and silenced opposition by the activity of his vengeance. His prosecution of Henry Bellasis, son to Lord Faulconberg, betrayed a punctilious apprehension of encroachment on his consequence, which can scarcely be reconciled with true dignity of mind. * On another occasion, Wentworth, having caused a delinquent to kneel before him, expressed much displeasure at this act of humiliation not being sufficiently protracted. † His vindictive prosecution of Sir David Foulis merits a more severe censure. The charges presented against this man, in the Star Chamber, were some disrespectful mention of the council of York, some invidious insinuations against its president, with his instigation of some persons not to pay the composition for knighthood, which he considered as an illegal and oppressive exaction. At the repeated instance of Wentworth, who urged his sig-

* This young nobleman was charged before the privy-council with having come into a room, at a public meeting, without showing any particular reverence to the lord president ; and with having aggravated the offence, by keeping his hat immoveably fixed on his head, when his lordship, in state, departed from the assembly. Bellasis pleaded that his negligence arose solely from accident ; that he had never been guilty of intentional disrespect ; and that, having his face turned the other way, he was not aware of his lordship's approach till he had passed. It was not, however, till after a month's imprisonment, and a written acknowledgment of his contrition, that this apology was accepted. Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 88.

† Ibid. p. 160.

nal punishment as a warning to others, * Foulis was degraded from his offices of Deputy Lieutenant, Justice of the Peace, and Member of the Council of York : he was fined five thousand pounds to the king, three thousand to Lord Wentworth ; and committed to the Fleet prison during his majesty's pleasure. His son, who had partaken in the offence, was also imprisoned, and fined five hundred pounds to the king. †

Promotion.

From the presidency of the council of York, Wentworth was speedily called to serve the crown in a more extended sphere. Though Charles, on the death of Buckingham, had formed a resolution never again to consign himself so completely into the hands of another favourite, it was soon apparent that Bishop Laud retained much of his patron's influence. Till his fiftieth year, Laud had

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 91, 145, 146, 189. In a letter to Secretary Cottington, (p. 145,) he says, " The sentencing this man settles the right of knighting business bravely for the crown : for, in your sentence, you will certainly declare the undoubted prerogatives the king hath therein by common law, by statute law, and the undeniable practice of all times." " I protest to God," he adds, " if 'it were in the person of another, I should in a case so foul, and with proof so clear, fine the father and the son in two thousand pounds apiece to his majesty, and the same to me for the scandal, besides open acknowledgments." The earnestness with which he expresses his thankfulness to his friends in the privy-council, who had promoted the sentence, shows how acceptable a service they had rendered him. *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 189, 104, 202.

† See their trials in *Rushworth*, Vol. II. 215—220.

lived immured in the seclusion of a college, distinguished only for the singularity of his notions, his frequent controversies, and the pertinacious ardour with which he maintained his theological opinions. Brought at length into the notice of ecclesiastics of influence, he was introduced to Buckingham ; and succeeded so completely in gaining the good will of the favourite, that he was received into his inmost confidence, and became his principal adviser. The career of his promotion was for some time retarded by King James, who looked with suspicion on his religious principles ; but the ascendancy of Buckingham over Charles easily removed these obstacles ; and Laud, after passing through some inferior sees, was created Bishop of London, and enabled to lift his eyes to the primacy. Deriving, from his long researches among the ecclesiastical writers of the dark ages, a profound veneration for superstitious ceremonies, and an exalted opinion of ecclesiastical power ; he proposed, as the grand object of his ambition, to reinstate the prelacy in its former ascendancy, to adorn the Church of England with the mysterious rites of Catholicism, and to extend his power and his tenets over every part of the kingdom. Impatient to execute his designs, and regardless of circumstances, it was to him no obstacle that an approximation to the Church of Rome was almost universally regarded with abhorrence ; that the tide of popular

opinion ran directly against him ; and that the power of the sovereign, already shaken, must be endangered to its foundation by enforcing such innovations. His maxim was "*to go through*" with his purposes, and to leave consequences to futurity. Irritable by nature, and jealous of his dignity, he had become, by the possession of power, incapable of enduring contradiction, and disdainful of all arts of conciliation ; and while he gratified Charles, by exalting the royal authority to the utmost, he took care that his own order should occupy the highest steps of the throne. *

To the Government of Ireland.

With this man, who now possessed such influence with the king, Wentworth had the address to form a firm and intimate connection. Laud had sufficient opportunity to observe the talents and vigour of the President of the North, and soon found reason to depend on his zealous co-operation. Next to these in the royal favour stood the Marquis of Hamilton ; and each soon found an appropriate place in the plan of government, which the new counsels of Charles induced him to adopt. Having removed his most urgent necessities, by the conclusion of peace with France and Spain, he now set himself in good earnest to establish his independent autho-

* Burnet's History of his own Times, Vol. I. p. 67, 68. Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 65. Archbishop Abbot's Narrative in Rushworth, Vol. I. p. 440. Laud's Diary.

rity. But as England, Scotland, and Ireland, had each their separate interests, their peculiar discontents; he found it convenient to consign a portion of his dominions to the particular superintendence of each minister. Laud, along with the supreme control of religion throughout the empire, obtained the chief direction of English affairs; Hamilton managed the business of Scotland; and Wentworth, with the title of Lord Deputy, obtained the government of Ireland. *

If this new station brought Wentworth an ac-
 cession of dignity, it called for the exertion of all Disordered
state of Ire-
land.
 his prudence, dexterity, and resolution. The conquest of Ireland, undertaken by the unjustifiable ambition of Henry the Second, had been feebly prosecuted by his successors. Presenting few temptations to ambition, and still fewer to avarice, it was, for the most part, abandoned to such desperate adventurers as were willing to purchase uncultivated possessions by a perilous struggle with the natives. The English settlements extended only to a few districts around Dublin, and the rest of the country was abandoned to the uncivilized Irish, who, issuing from their morasses and fortresses, occasionally retaliated the devastations of their op-

* Rushworth's Preface to Vol. II. Radcliffe's Essay. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I.

pressors. Instead of communicating their more improved habits, the English settlers, engaged in a continual warfare, contracted the ferocious manners of the Irish ; and could at length be distinguished only by their language, and their inveterate antipathy to the natives. The salutary customs of the invaders were wholly lost to Ireland ; and the edicts introducing their laws disregarded. Parliaments, composed entirely of delegates from within the English Pale, and summoned at the discretion of the lord deputy, were employed as the best means to sanction every act of oppression, and screen the offender from punishment.

These disorders had been in some measure alleviated by the wholesome regulations introduced by Sir Edward Poynings, who governed Ireland in the reign of Henry the Seventh. By his influence, the Irish parliament decreed that all the laws hitherto enacted in England should be equally in force in Ireland. And, as the discretionary power which the lords-lieutenants possessed, of summoning parliaments at pleasure, and passing what measures they desired, had given rise to excessive abuses and loud complaints ; he caused it to be enacted, that a parliament should not be summoned above once a year in Ireland, nor even then till the propositions on which it was to decide had been seen and approved by the privy-council of

England.* But by the native Irish these advantages were unfelt and unregarded. Exasperated by the harsh and wanton insults of their invaders, they had contracted an unusual ferocity of manners; and being accounted unworthy of the rights of humanity, they had almost ceased to retain the character of men. Abandoning cultivation, they enjoyed, amidst their fastnesses, the pride of savage independence; and looked down with disdain on the more civilized habits of the English. Their scattered tribes, without arms, without discipline, and without concert, were unable to expel even the feeble settlements of their adversaries; and possessed just sufficient force to cover the frontier with alarm, rapine, and bloodshed.

Towards the conclusion of Elizabeth's reign, the mismanagement of the English governors, and the secret aids of arms and officers from Spain, enabled the native chiefs to form such extensive insurrections, as obliged the queen to think seriously of completing their subjugation. Various attempts were made by Essex and others, without success; but Lord Montjoy at length penetrated into the heart of the Irish retreats, took their castles, dispersed their predatory bands, and established detachments for the suppression of future disorders. He closed his vigorous and honourable administra-

* Leland's *History of Ireland*, edit. 1773, Vol. II. p. 107, 511.

tion with emancipating the whole body of Irish peasantry from subjection to their native chiefs, and receiving them under the immediate protection of government. *

With a judgment which reflects more honour on the memory of King James than all his other measures, that monarch resolved to give effect to the plan so happily conceived. Large tracts of waste country which remained, by conquest or forfeiture, in the hands of the crown, were parcelled out in moderate divisions, and distributed among new settlers from England and Scotland. By their example, it was hoped, that the ancient inhabitants, now compelled to desist from their predatory warfare, would gradually be initiated in the arts and manners of civilized life. The rude customs of the Irish were now discountenanced; the laws of England every where enforced; courts of judicature, after the model of the English, established; and representatives from every quarter of the kingdom summoned to Parliament. †

Had the prosecution of this plan corresponded to its auspicious commencement, Ireland might have quickly approached the mother country in civilization. But various abuses and accidents intervened to impede its progress. Many of those who undertook to settle the new plantations executed

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 416.

† Ibid. p. 429 to 450.

their contract slowly and imperfectly ; yet the king, charmed with the partial benefits resulting from his measures, became an enthusiast in the scheme of plantation. Not content with distributing all the lands in the actual possession of the crown, he encouraged adventurers to discover flaws in the titles of old proprietors ; and had the injustice to make room for these informers, by dispossessing the owners of estates, for defects in their tenures, as old as the original conquest of Ireland. The success of these interested discoverers now spread alarm and indignation throughout the island, while every one trembled lest some unknown and obsolete claim of the crown should suddenly drive him from the inheritance of his fathers.*

The despotic maxims of government, introduced under Charles I. in England, soon extended their unhappy influence to the sister kingdom. The courts of common law began to find their jurisdiction invaded by the arbitrary decrees of the privy-council. The rights of juries were infringed ; the extortions, which the English people suffered from an ill-paid soldiery, were still more severely felt in Ireland ; and the execution of martial law, which here also was introduced, was attended with still greater abuses.†

The discontents arising from these circumstances

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 466, 468.

† Ibid. p. 470.

were embittered by theological discord. From the introduction of Protestantism by Queen Elizabeth, religious zeal had mingled with the political animosity of the Irish; and, though not the cause, had often been the pretext of their insurrections.* The Popish clergy inflamed the bigotry of an ignorant people; the old English settlers of the Pale were not less zealous than the native Irish, for the faith of their forefathers; and the penalties now enforced against recusants were equally odious to all. On the other hand, the new planters, whom James introduced from England and Scotland, carried along with them the tenets of the Presbyterians and Puritans, all their antipathy to the Catholics, and all their dislike to a religious ceremonial. The rigour of the church courts, and the exaction of tithes, formed great aggravations of these discontents.†

Lord Falkland, whom Charles had appointed lord-deputy, found the hands of government too weak to chastise the seditious and disorderly. The armed force of Ireland had been allowed to dwindle to thirteen hundred and fifty foot, and two hundred horse: the companies into which this insignificant body was divided were commanded by privy-counsellors, who took care to secure the pay out of the receipts of the exchequer, and com-

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 412.

† Ibid. p. 481.

pounded with the privates for a third or fourth part of the government allowance. The privates, who were often the menial servants of the officers, possessed neither the appearance nor the spirit of soldiers, and excited only contempt among the turbulent inhabitants.*

The embarrassments of the English government, and an annual deficiency of the Irish revenue, prevented Charles from listening to the repeated demands of Falkland for an increase of the army. At length, however, he resolved to augment his Irish forces to five thousand foot and five hundred horse; and, to prevent this new charge from falling on his exhausted treasury, he commanded them to be quartered on the different towns and counties, each of which was, for three months in turn, to receive a certain portion of the troops, and supply them with pay, clothes, and subsistence.†

The people of Ireland, informed of this purpose, resolved, by a liberal voluntary contribution, to avert the vexatious imposition, and to procure the redress of their most prominent grievances. The Catholics, who had most to apprehend from the execution of the existing penal statutes, were the first movers in this plan; and the Protestants had sufficient grounds to concur heartily in the

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 471, 472.

† Ibid. p. 480.

proposal. By permission of Lord Falkland, delegates from both parties passed over to London, and laid their offers and their requests at the foot of the throne. For the maintenance of the troops they offered a voluntary contribution of one hundred thousand pounds, to be paid by instalments of ten thousand pounds a quarter; a far larger sum than had hitherto been obtained from the poverty of Ireland. The *graces*, or concessions, which they demanded in return, were extremely moderate. They related to certain abuses arising from barbarous manners and a defective police; to exactions in the courts of justice; depredations committed by the soldiery; monopolies in trade; penal statutes on account of religion; retrospective inquiries into defective titles, beyond a period of sixty years; and while relief from these grievances was prayed, they desired the confirmation of the concession by an Irish parliament.* The last two articles were by no means acceptable to Charles. He had formed a design to augment his revenue, and gratify his courtiers, by the discovery of ancient flaws in the titles of the present proprietors; and to grant a parliament to Ireland was a conspicuous departure from that plan of government which he was attempting to consolidate in England. His necessities, however, were urgent, the

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 320.

contribution opportune ; he therefore judged it expedient to give, for the present, his unreserved assent to all the demands.

The joy diffused over Ireland by these concessions was soon allayed by suspicions of the king's sincerity. Lord Falkland, when informed of the royal sanction, hastened to gratify the people by issuing writs for a parliament ; but by a strange omission, these writs proved altogether invalid. According to the law of Poynings, explained and ratified by subsequent statutes, * no parliament could be summoned in Ireland, till a certificate of the laws to be proposed in it, with the reasons for enacting them, should first be transmitted by the deputy and council to England, and his majesty's licence under the great seal be obtained for holding it. † As Falkland, without attending to these essential forms, had, by his own authority, issued the writs, they were, by the English council, declared null and void. ‡ This irregularity was suspected to proceed from some collusion between Falkland and the court of England ; and as no steps were taken to repair an error so easily amended, it became evident that the meeting of a parliament was intentionally delayed. §

The imprudence of the Catholics threatened

* 3d and 4th Phil. and Mary.

† Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 20.

‡ Ibid. p. 19.

§ Leland, Vol. II. p. 486.

also to involve Ireland in domestic broils. Elevated by their favourable reception at court, and confident of the queen's protection, they beheld, in the late concessions, the earnest of a complete victory, which seemed due to their superior numbers, and still more to the imagined verity of their creed. Churches were seized for their worship; the streets of Dublin thronged with their processions; an academy erected for the religious instruction of their youth; and their clergy reinforced by swarms of young priests from the seminaries of France and Spain.* By these transactions, both the Protestants and the English government had reason to be alarmed; since the clergy, who entirely led the people, universally maintained the Pope's supremacy, and had bound themselves to labour for the propagation of the faith, and the extirpation of heretics.†

Roused by the loud remonstrances of the Protestants, Falkland at length issued a proclamation prohibiting the Romish clergy from exercising a control over the people, and from celebrating their worship in public.‡ This edict, strongly expressed but feebly enforced, served only to incense the Catholics without satisfying the Protestants. The recusants complained that the promised

* Leland, Vol. III. p. 3.

† Ibid. p. 4.

‡ Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 21.

graces were withheld ; and now represented, as an insupportable burden, that voluntary contribution which, at first, they had so cheerfully paid. In vain did government endeavour to appease their discontents by consenting to accept the contribution by instalments of five, instead of ten thousand pounds a quarter: the general clamour, unjustly directed against Lord Falkland, became so loud as at length to procure his recall. *

The temporary administration, on which the 1630. management of affairs now devolved, was still more obnoxious to the Catholics. The two Lords Justices, Viscount Ely and the Earl of Cork, the former Lord Chancellor, and the latter Lord High Treasurer of Ireland, were zealous anti-Catholics ; and, without waiting for orders from England, proceeded to a rigorous execution of the penal statutes against the recusants. The latter derived a temporary courage from an intimation of the royal displeasure at these proceedings ; but, having come to open blows with the Protestants, they had the mortification to witness the suppression of the academy and religious houses, which they had erected in Dublin. †

To the difficulties thus caused to the government, was added the embarrassing consideration that the voluntary contribution was soon to termi-

* Leland, Vol. II. p. 3, 6.

† Ibid. Vol. III. p. 6, 7, 8.

nate. The Irish, exasperated by the evasion of the promised concessions, were not likely to continue their voluntary supplies; and it seemed a desperate attempt for a divided government, with a feeble army, to enforce compulsory exactions. Yet it was impossible for the court of England, pressed by its aggravated necessities, to defray the expence of an augmented army in Ireland; and some prompt and decisive measures seemed requisite to prevent that distracted island from becoming not only useless but dangerous to the monarchy. Such was the situation of affairs when Wentworth was appointed to the administration of Ireland.

January
1632.

Although he received his commission at the commencement of 1632, it was not till July in the following year that he was able to reach the place of his destination. The arrangements for his private affairs, and for the administration of his presidency in his absence, occupied a considerable time. And when all these were completed, he was still delayed some months for the arrival of a man of war from the Thames; for, strange as it may now appear, so dangerously was the Irish Channel infested with pirates, that Wentworth could not venture to pass over without convoy.*

Dexterity
in raising
supplies.

But, during this interval, the lord deputy was

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 85, 87.

not inactive. He carefully informed himself of the state of his new government, planned the measures of his future administration, and ascertained the powers necessary to give efficiency to his authority.* He also gave his serious attention to the most difficult of all departments, the raising of supplies. The voluntary contribution was now paid up, and it was indispensable, either by its renewal, or by some other method, to procure resources for the maintenance of the army till his arrival in Ireland. But the lords justices, on being applied to, declared it as their decided opinion, that there were no other means of supply than that of rigorously levying the penalties imposed by statute on the Catholics, for absence from public worship. Wentworth was averse to an expedient which he knew to be unacceptable to the English court, and calculated to excite bitter discontent among the Catholics. He resolved, if possible, to procure a continuance of the voluntary contribution; and in the letter of the lords justices he found an expedient to alarm the Catholics into compliance. By his direction, the king wrote to the lords justices, bitterly complaining of the evils which they had represented, the impossibility of raising voluntary supplies, and the necessity of levying the penalties. "If this indeed be the case, I must," adds the

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p 61—93.

king, "as you advise, *streighten* the graces which I have granted, and, rather than let the army loose on the inhabitants, take advantage of my *legal rights and profits*." *

While awaiting the effect of this letter, Wentworth dispatched to Ireland a Catholic agent, to represent to his brethren the lord deputy's regard for their interests, his willingness to act as mediator between them and the king, and his hopes that a moderate voluntary contribution would be accepted as a substitute for their heavy fines. † Having discovered that his temporary representatives, the lords justices, were seeking to counteract his purposes, he reprimanded their presumption in such terms as made them anxious to avoid, by any sacrifice, the resentment of so peremptory a governor. ‡ Alarmed and silenced by these dexterous measures, all parties agreed to enlarge their voluntary contribution, by four additional quarterly payments of five thousand pounds each; and Wentworth was thus enabled to mature, without embarrassment, his plans for a permanent revenue.

Principal
objects.

The grand objects proposed by the lord deputy were to render the king's power completely uncontrollable in Ireland; to derive from her a revenue sufficient both to support her own expenditure and

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 71.

† Ibid. p. 74.

‡ Ibid. p. 76, 77.

to aid the treasury of England ; and thus, by every expedient, to render the province advantageous to the crown. Schemes he had for enriching Ireland, and plans for promoting her civilization ; but, “in all these affairs,” writes he to the king, “the benefit of the crown must and shall be my principal, nay, my sole end.” *

The king had allowed Wentworth full discretion to draw up his plan of governing, and the conditions for which he stipulated discover no less sagacity than ambition. Never was a monarch more beset by rapacious courtiers : already had they procured the reversion of the most valuable offices in Ireland ; and it was not to be doubted that the Irish treasury, if anywise enriched, would become the object of their watchful avarice. Wentworth therefore provided, in the first article of his instructions, that his majesty should bestow no grant on the Irish establishment before the ordinary revenue of the crown in that country should be equal to its charges, and its debts fully cleared. To secure the patronage necessary to the influence of the governor, he made farther and more important stipulations, viz.

Instructions
for his go-
vernment.

That none of the grants already given for the reversion of offices in Ireland should be confirmed, and none for the future bestowed.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 242.

That no grant, of what nature soever, relative to Ireland, should be suffered to pass till it were first made known to the deputy, and sanctioned by the seal of that kingdom.

That no person should be appointed a bishop, a judge, a privy-counsellor, or a law officer of any description in Ireland, till his majesty had first consulted with the deputy.

That the same rule should be observed before any new office were created in that kingdom.

That the places usually in the deputy's gift, both civil and military, should be freely left to his own disposal, and not granted by his majesty to the importunity of any candidate in England.

And that no particular complaint of injustice or oppression, against any person in Ireland, should be admitted at the English court, unless it appeared that the party aggrieved had first addressed himself to the deputy.

A committee of the English privy-council had been set apart for the consideration of Irish affairs: but, to ensure secrecy, and prevent obstructions, it was now provided that all propositions from the deputy, relative to the revenue, might be communicated exclusively to his friend the Lord Treasurer, and his other dispatches addressed solely to Secretary Coke. *

* See these instructions in Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 65, 66.

In these ample instructions, Wentworth, before his departure from England, procured such alterations as he judged expedient, * with this remarkable addition, that he was to consider them as changeable on the spot whenever the advancement of his majesty's affairs required. † He received the fullest assurance that, in all his measures, the king would avow and support him. ‡

Of these vast discretionary powers, he afterwards procured such specific confirmations as he judged expedient. While Ireland continued to be governed entirely as a conquered country, the lord deputy and his council had occasionally superseded the courts of common law, and assumed the decision of private civil causes. This practice, so liable to glaring abuse, had been prohibited by proclamation, during the government of Lord Falkland. Wentworth, however, soon discovering that there were many cases in which the course of the common law would obstruct his projected measures, procured a suspension of the prohibition; and numerous suitors, who hoped from favour what they could not expect from truth, crowded from the ordinary courts to the Castle Chamber. § That persons of rank and consequence might not carry their complaints against his government to the

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 86.

† Ibid. p. 91.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid. p. 202, 223.

throne, Wentworth procured his majesty's order, that none of the nobility or principal officers should presume to quit Ireland without a special licence from the lord deputy. * For the sanction of his more delicate measures, he procured a private and direct correspondence with the king himself; and from the introduction of his confidential friends, Wandesford and Radcliffe, to official situations, and to the privy-council, he derived a select cabinet, with whom he could in secret discuss his resolutions and enterprises. †

Treatment
of the Privy-
Council.

Armed with these extraordinary powers, he commenced his government with an activity and vigour, which promised a speedy revolution in the state of affairs. From the privy-council, which had been accustomed to bear a great sway in the management of the state, which included the lords justices, along with the most considerable person-

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 348, 362. Wentworth was countenanced in this measure by the 37th grace, which enacted the same provision, but with a different view—to prevent men of large fortunes from deserting their estates, and wasting their revenues abroad. Ibid. p. 324.

† We learn from Radcliffe's Essay, that Wentworth, since the retirement of Mr Greenwood to his living, had been accustomed to take the advice of those two friends on all his affairs, both public and private, scarcely writing a letter without submitting it to their inspection. In his dispatches, he often speaks of their introduction to the privy-council, and their private assistance, as his greatest aid in the management of his government.

ages in Ireland, he had reason to expect a troublesome opposition to measures, which tended to annihilate every balance to the authority of the sovereign. His conduct, therefore, from the commencement, was calculated to shake their confidence, and awe them into submission. In calling his first privy-council, he summoned only a select number of the members; a mode of proceeding which, though usual at the English court, was hitherto unknown in Ireland, and occasioned inexpressible mortification to those who were omitted. But the more honoured number found little reason to be proud of the distinction. After assembling at the time appointed, they were left for some hours to wait the leisure of the lord deputy; and when he at length arrived, the business which he introduced required their attention rather as auditors than counsellors. *

A provision for the immediate necessities of government, especially the maintenance of the army, was the subject which he submitted to them at the next interview. After he had waited for some time to hear their propositions, a sullen silence was at length broke by Sir Adam Loftus, son of the Lord Chancellor, who proposed that the voluntary contribution should be continued for another year,

* Leland, Vol. III. p. 12, 13. Carte's *Life of Ormond*, Vol. I. p. 37. Strafford's *Letters*, Vol. I. p. 97, 98.

and that a parliament should, in the meantime, be requested, to reform abuses, and establish a permanent revenue. The proposal met with an unpromising reception, and was openly opposed by Sir William Parsons, Master of the Wards, who doubted whether their act could bind the nation at large, and whether the people could be brought to acquiesce in such repeated demands on their unrequited generosity. Wentworth now thought it time to interpose. He had, he said, called them together, not from any necessity, but to afford them an opportunity of showing their loyalty; that the Protestants, who shared most largely in the favours of government, ought to imitate the example of liberality, last year set them by the Catholics; and "if my arguments are ineffectual, I will," he added, "undertake, at the peril of my head, to make the king's army subsist, and provide for itself in Ireland, without your assistance." * After this imperious language, he found it expedient to express a hope, that their obedience would be speedily rewarded by a parliament in Ireland; and so extremely was a parliament desired, that the prospect of it procured a cheerful acquiescence in the proposal of Sir Adam Loftus, not only from the privy-council, but throughout the island. †

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 99.
Vol. III. p. 14.

† Ibid. Leland,

A parliament was regarded by the people of Ireland as the only means of procuring redress for their grievances, and security for their rights. They had, indeed, carried their complaints to the throne, and experienced a gracious assent to their demands; but the faith of the monarch had been violated with so little scruple, that a solemn act of the legislature could alone merit their confidence. It was the hope of a parliament that first induced them to propose a voluntary contribution, and that had since allured them to acquiesce in its continuance. *

Wentworth had the sagacity to perceive the impropriety of refusing this universal wish of the Irish. He had remarked the sudden alacrity of the council on the mention of a parliament, † and he clearly saw that the nation at large was actuated by similar feelings. Were the people disappointed in this favourite object, what means would remain to government to supply its recurring necessities? Would he not at length be compelled to put his threat in execution, and march, at the head of an army, to exact their reluctant contributions? A contingency which would endanger a civil war, and tarnish the lustre of his administration, rendered the lord deputy no less eager than

His efforts to procure a Parliament for Ireland.

* Leland, Vol. III. p. 14.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 99.

the Irish to procure a parliament. But the extreme aversion of the king to those assemblies presented a very discouraging obstacle: while attempting to consolidate his independent authority in England, it seemed a dangerous example to yield a parliament to Ireland. He had, indeed, given his royal word for this concession; but the confirmation of the other graces, which had been expressly stated as the principal object of a parliament, was what he desired above all things to evade. From the discovery of defective titles, he still hoped to increase his own revenue, and gratify his courtiers; and he was unwilling to give the proprietors a security which would put an end to these pretensions.*

January 22,
1634.

Wentworth was well acquainted with these objections of the king; yet did he not despair to overcome them by more powerful considerations. In an elaborate dispatch, he represented that the English and Irish parliaments were widely different; that the former might propose what they pleased for debate, and pursue or drop it at pleasure; while, by the provident law of Poyning's, the latter could occupy itself only with such topics as had first been canvassed and approved by the privy-council of England.† He dwelt on the exi-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 252.

† The import of Poyning's law gave rise to many violent contro-

gencies of the state, the urgent necessity of making some permanent provision for them, and the propriety of trying the authorized methods, before resorting to extraordinary and dangerous courses. As more than the public revenue of Ireland was spent on its internal establishments, and the bur-

versies, both before and after the time of Wentworth. It was, we have seen, originally gratifying to the Irish as a defence against those governors, who, by means of parliaments hastily summoned, were enabled to procure the sanction of the legislature to their most tyrannical acts. Hence the expediency of a provision, that no parliament should be summoned in Ireland, till an exposition of the bills to be debated in it was first transmitted to the English privy-council. But when, in the revolution of circumstances, the people became interested that parliaments should be more frequently held, and the court that they should be discontinued, it was discovered that this provision admitted of two interpretations. The popular party maintained that, if measures were produced, of sufficient weight to satisfy the king and council, the intention of the law of Poynings was fulfilled; and that it was never designed to preclude the members of parliament, when once assembled, from introducing such other topics as they might deem expedient for the general welfare. But the partizans of the court contended, that the express letter of the law was not to be thus evaded; that the previous approbation of the king and council was distinctly required to each proposition; and that no other measures could ever be made the subject of discussion. This latter interpretation, which gave the king so decided a control over parliamentary motions, was firmly maintained by Wentworth; and rendered subservient by him, in the sequel, to very important purposes. He frequently takes occasion, in his letters and dispatches, to applaud the law; declare that "he is infinitely in love with this prerogative;" and extols it as "a mighty power gotten by the wisdom of former times." *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 269.

dence hitherto laid on that country had been extremely light, his majesty had the strongest claim on the liberality of the nation. And what their gratitude should deny, might be expected from their fears, since they laboured under a serious apprehension that the voluntary contribution, already levied for several successive years, might ultimately be demanded as a hereditary charge. If these reasons should appear sufficient for calling a parliament, there were grounds equally strong for taking this step without delay. If deferred till the voluntary contribution should again be about to terminate, it would appear to proceed from necessity: the parliament would be emboldened to clog their grants with conditions; "and conditions," added Wentworth, "are not to be admitted with any subjects, much less with this people, where your majesty's absolute sovereignty goes much higher than it is taken (perhaps) to be in England."

He unfolded a plan which he had devised, to avert those uneasy demands for the confirmation of the "graces," which his majesty so much apprehended. He proposed to divide the parliament into two sessions, the first of which should be exclusively devoted to the subject of supplies; while the second, which might be held six months afterwards, should be occupied with the confirmation of the "graces," and other national measures. Par-

liament, from a desire to conciliate the good will of its sovereign, would, in its first session, in all probability, grant a sufficient supply for the expenditure of three years ; and this concession once secured, his majesty might hold what language he pleased with respect to the "graces." Wentworth pledged himself to procure the return of a nearly equal number of Protestants and Catholics to the House of Commons ; that both parties, being nearly balanced against each other, might be more easily managed. He proposed to obtain qualifications for a sufficient number of military officers, whose situations rendered them dependent on the crown, and ready to give their votes as the deputy should direct. Could the parties be nearly balanced, peculiar arguments would not be wanting for each ; the Catholics might be privately warned, that if no other provision should be made for the maintenance of the army, it would become necessary to levy on them the legal fines ; while the Protestants should be given to understand, that, until a regular revenue should be established, his majesty could not let go the voluntary contribution, or irritate the recusants by the execution of penal statutes. As to the upper house, he concluded that his majesty might reckon on all the bishops ; and there were motives enough of hope and fear, to prevent any serious opposition from the temporal lords.*

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 183 to 187. This dispatch is also inserted in Rushworth's Collections, Vol. II. p. 208 to 212.

Charles at length yielded to these representations, and transmitted the necessary orders for holding a parliament ; * yet was he careful, in his confidential letters, to caution the lord deputy against this grand object of his suspicion and abhorrence. " As for that hydra," said he, " take good heed ; for you know that here I have found it cunning as well as malicious. It is true that your grounds are well laid, and, I assure you, that I have a great trust in your care and judgment : yet my opinion is, that it will not be the worse for my service, though their obstinacy make you break them, for I fear that they have some ground to demand more than it is fit for me to give." † Charles was, not unreasonably, afraid lest his royal sanction formerly given to the " graces," should be urged as a tenable ground for demanding their confirmation ; and he distrusted even the address of Wentworth to elude the requisition. ‡

Methods to
subdue op-
position.

The deputy, however, found, in his own dexterity and vigour, resources adequate to the occasion ; and proceeded, with a high and resolute hand, to subdue every appearance of opposition. When the council, in conformity with the provisions of Poynings' law, assembled to deliberate on

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 231.

† *King to Wentworth*, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 233.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 232.

the propositions to be transmitted to his majesty, as subjects for the discussion of the ensuing parliament ; they ventured to suggest several popular laws as necessary to conciliate the houses. And, in regard to subsidies, instead of transmitting the bill with blanks to be filled up at his majesty's discretion, they were of opinion that the amount should both be specified, and confined within the strictest limits of necessity. Wentworth interrupted their proceedings with indignation. He reminded them that, as privy-counsellors, it was their business to study, not what should please the people, but what might gratify the king : his majesty, he assured them, would admit of no conditions, no bargaining for his favour ; that he was resolved to procure a permanent and adequate revenue ; and that he was desirous to accomplish this by a parliament, only as the most beaten tract, *yet not more legal than if done by his royal prerogative*, if the ordinary way should fail him. Should the king be disappointed, where he hath every reason to expect compliance, “ in a cause so just and necessary, I will not scruple to appear at the head of the army, and there either persuade you that his majesty hath reason on his side, or perish in the execution of an honourable duty.” He gave them to understand, that they would assuredly gain most by a ready and cheerful compliance. He reminded them of the irreparable breach which had taken

place between the king and the parliament in England, and which had led to such extraordinary and unwelcome measures. "I could tell them," says he, "as one that had held his eyes as open to these proceedings as any one, that to whatever other cause this mischief might be attributed, it arose solely from the ill-grounded and narrow suspicions of the parliament, and their obstinate refusal to yield to the king that confidence which he so justly demanded from his people."*

This address, delivered with energy and vehemence, produced the desired effect. Confounded and abashed, the council felt as if they had stood in the presence of a despotic sovereign; and silently acquiesced in all the proposals of Wentworth.†

The lords of the Pale had, in former times, possessed a great control in the administration of Irish affairs; and the privy-council had been accustomed to submit to their inspection and deliberation,

* *Stafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 237, 238, 239. This language from one, who had so actively infused these suspicions, and who had insisted that redress should ever precede supplies, did not escape the unlucky jeers of Wentworth's associates at court. Laud, with his usual love for a jest, writes him, that when that part of his dispatch, which mentioned his reprobation of the turbulent proceedings of the English parliament, was read before the committee of the privy-council, Lord Cottington added, *Et quorum pars magna fui!* *Stafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 255.

† *Stafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 255.

the projected acts which were to be transmitted for the approbation of the king. The Earl of Fingal was deputed by his brother peers to represent this ancient privilege, and to request its observance on the present occasion; but these traditionary rights were treated by Wentworth with such contempt and acrimony, that the Earl was glad to excuse his confidence by an apology.* The deputy's management of the elections at first experienced some opposition; but, after he had fined one refractory sheriff two hundred pounds, and put another in his place, he soon found resistance converted into submission and obedience.†

That commanding and peremptory tone, which had produced so effectual an impression on the council, proved equally successful in the parliament. Having opened the session with a pomp calculated to astonish and abash the vulgar, he informed the houses of his majesty's pleasure that two sessions should be held; of which the first, according to the natural order, should be devoted to the sovereign, and the second to the subject. "In demanding supplies, I only require you to provide for your own safety; I expect, therefore, your contributions will be both liberal and permanent: for it is far below the dignity of my master to come at every year's end, with his hat in his hand, to in-

Speech to
Parliament,
July 1634.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 246.

† Ibid. p. 270.

treat that you would be pleased to preserve yourselves." He assured them that if they expected constant protection without contributing towards it, they looked for more than had ever been the portion of a conquered kingdom. He warned them against disobedience by the fate of the English parliament; and concluded with an explicit intimation that future reward or punishment would certainly be dealt out according to their conduct. *

Management of the Commons in the first Session.

This speech, delivered with a loud voice and vehement gestures, was in public applauded for its eloquence, and in private dreaded for its vigour. † Confiding in the success of his plans, Wentworth had resolved to demand from the Commons the extraordinary grant of six subsidies; and had procured the reluctant assent of the council to this exorbitant requisition. ‡ This proposition he caused to be introduced into the house on the day immediately subsequent to their assembling; and took the parties by surprise, before any plan of opposition could be arranged. Ignorant of each other's sentiments, Catholics and Protestants strove to distinguish themselves by their loyal devotion. The six subsidies, voted unconditionally, were rendered payable in four years; and entrusted to the discretion of the lord deputy, accompanied only

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 287—290.

† Ibid. p. 273.

‡ Ibid. p. 259.

with a humble request that he would be pleased to employ one portion in discharging the public debts, and another in buying in pensions and rents for the amelioration of the revenue. * All parties united in testifying their distinguished respect for their governor. Sir Robert Talbot, one of the members, having, in the ardour of debate, been betrayed into some unguarded reflections on Wentworth's conduct, he was instantly expelled, and committed to custody, till he should, on his knees, implore pardon of the lord deputy. †

While the Commons were thus passing votes full of zeal and loyalty, the Lords exhibited very different sentiments. Disregarding Wentworth's distribution of the sessions, they took into consideration the redress of grievances, the confirmation of the "graces," the enactment of various salutary regulations; and even proceeded to draw up certain acts to be transmitted to England for his majesty's approbation. Wentworth, secure of the Commons, took no notice of these impotent proceedings, till the money bills were passed, and the term appointed for the session about to expire. He then, by a formal protest, warned the lords of the irregularity of their proceedings; pointed out their violation of the law of Poynings; and assert-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 277, 279.

† *Comm. Journals*, Vol. I. p. 116. *Leland*, Vol. III. p. 18.

ed the exclusive right of the deputy and council to frame and transmit laws to England. *

The triumphant manner in which Wentworth conducted this session, impressed the English court with surprise and admiration. While they found it so difficult to govern a people habituated to subordination, or to move the liberality of a parliament accustomed to considerable grants ; they saw Wentworth exact implicit submission from a nation hitherto noted for turbulence, and draw large sums from a parliament which now for the first time granted a subsidy. † The Irish clergy, though strongly tinctured with puritanism, had contended in zeal with the laity ; for the convocation, which sat along with the parliament, had granted eight subsidies.

In the
second
Session.

The part, however, which still remained to be acted, appeared replete with difficulty. The people had been liberal, on the faith that the king would be generous ; and it seemed necessary both for his dignity, and for the preservation of tranquillity, that this confidence should not be disappointed. But Wentworth, trusting to that boldness and decision which hitherto proved so successful, resolved to gratify his sovereign, whatever might become of the popular humours. With a devotion most acceptable to Charles, he wrote to

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 279.

† Ibid. p. 307.

him that he and the council would take on themselves the whole blame of refusing, while the whole merit of granting should be given to his majesty. * With regard to the "graces" not fit to be passed into laws, he would boldly state that he had not thought proper to transmit them among the propositions for his majesty's approbation; † and, without entering into further explanations, would simply inform them that this was done for great and weighty reasons of state. ‡ The plan was hazardous, for the "graces" to be denied were those of which the Irish were most particularly desirous. One "grace" was to prevent the inquiries into defective titles from being carried beyond a period of sixty years; and another was to guarantee the proprietors of Connaught against some dubious claims of the crown: but as these provisions would

* Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 328, 339.

† The law of Poynings, by which the parliament was prevented from entering on any discussion without this previous form, was the circumstance to which Wentworth trusted for the prevention of all troublesome opposition to his plans: With this rein in his hand, he felt no alarm at turning the attention of the parliament to the "graces," as he expresses by an apposite figure in a letter to Secretary Coke: "For my own part, I see not any hazard in it, considering that we have this lyme hound in our power, still to take off when we please, which is not so easy with your parliament of England, where sometimes they hunt loose, forth of command, chuse and give over their own game as they list themselves." Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 305.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 338.

have dried up a source from which the king expected to enrich himself and his courtiers, they were on no account to be granted. *

December
1634.

The same arts, however, which ruled the first session, proved effectual in the second. In his opening speech, Wentworth resolutely avowed that he had refused to transmit certain graces to England, and asserted his right to do so by the law of Poyninga. He explained to the parliament, that, by this statute, the consent of the deputy and council was as necessary to a law in Ireland, as the sanction of the parliament was in England. † The members heard in silence what they feared to contradict; and Wentworth, in his next dispatch, could boast to the king, that the obnoxious graces were lulled asleep for ever. ‡

In the course of the session, the Catholics, who had suffered most by the refusal of the "graces," began to show their discontent, in the House of Commons, by opposing some bills introduced by the deputy. As the Protestants, on whom he now depended, had lost several questions by their negligent attendance, he resolved to make a final trial of strength; and, if unsuccessful, to conclude the session by an immediate prorogation. But the critical question, which concerned the expulsion of

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 320, 321.

† Ibid. p. 345. ‡ Ibid. p. 341.

a refractory Catholic, was carried triumphantly in his favour ; and he was afterwards enabled, without opposition, to enact such regulations as he deemed expedient. *

The lords he not only restrained from such discussions as they had hazarded in the last session, but abridged in their authority by new deductions from the law of Poynings. One Sir Vincent Gookin had arraigned the vices of his countrymen in a libel so acrimonious, as to excite the indignation of all ranks ; and the parliament, entering into the general resentment, resolved to bring him to punishment by impeachment before the lords. Here, however, Wentworth interposed. He censured the offender, applauded their intentions ; but reminded them that, by the law of Poynings, they were precluded from acts of judicature, as well as of legislation, unless when authorized by the deputy and council. The importance of the concession, thus wrested from the lords, was well understood in England, where impeachments had occasioned such frequent uneasiness to the court. In his next dispatch, Wentworth congratulated his majesty on this acquisition : and, in answer, received the king's warm approbation of his prudent foresight, and an order to try the offender in the Castle Chamber. †

* *Stafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 350, 351. † *Ibid.* p. 349.

Success. With a still greater stretch of authority, but with equal facility, he silenced some opposition to his measures which arose in the convocation ; and, at the close of the session, he found himself the uncontrolled disposer of the destinies of Ireland. *

Exultation. Elated with the unexampled success of all his measures, he justly boasted, in his dispatches, of the important services which he had rendered to the crown. He spoke of vexatious embarrassments succeeded by an ample revenue ; of importunate demands superseded by an unlimited prerogative. He declared that if his majesty was hereafter disappointed of any reasonable desire in Ireland, it might justly be laid to the charge of the deputy : “ for now,” said he, “ *the king is as absolute here as any prince in the whole world can be.*” †

His application for an Earldom.

The great acquisitions, which he had so rapidly made for the crown, emboldened Wentworth to aspire to some of the sovereign's rewards. An earldom had, in his eyes, peculiar charms ; and he ventured to express his desire to the king. This distinction, he said, while it added dignity to his person, would greatly assist his future usefulness, by affording an equivocal proof of his majesty's approbation and favour. ‡ But Charles was by no means so inclined to grant this request as the suitor

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 343. † *Ibid.* p. 344.

‡ Wentworth to the King, *Strafford's Letters*. Vol. I. p. 301.

expected. He had indeed been very lavish in his commendations of the deputy, and must have felt all the importance of his services ; but he had no longer the task of gaining over an opponent : Wentworth, wholly disjoined from the opposition, was now irrevocably devoted to the court. He had, it was true, conferred on the crown benefits which even exceeded expectation : but his administration was only begun ; still greater services were to be expected from him ; and it might not be impolitic for the sovereign to retain in his hands an incentive which appeared so alluring to the ambition of his minister.

There were yet other reasons for receiving the application of Wentworth with coldness. Charles, like other princes of the Stuart race, was ill fitted to refuse the demands of his courtiers, many of whom looked to the Irish establishment as a mine of patronage. Wentworth, before entering on the government, had stipulated that no such grant should be made without his concurrence. Charles, unable to refuse such grants altogether, had made them conditionally, and, in his letters to Wentworth, desired him to concede or refuse them, as the good of the service required ; “ yet so too,” added he, “ as I may have thanks howsoever ; that if there be any thing to be denied, you may do it, not I.” * This ungracious office, repeatedly

* King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 140.

urged with more earnestness than delicacy, * Wentworth undertook with the most loyal devotion ; † and having, moreover, interfered to restrain both parties in regard to the questionable titles, he had accumulated on himself a load of displeasure, both from the English courtiers and the Irish people. By conferring on this minister any marked distinction, Charles would seem to approve every part of his conduct, his imperious speeches, his harsh refusals : and thus draw on himself a portion of that odium which he was so solicitous to avoid. His reply to Wentworth's application obscurely intimated these sentiments. He thanked him for taking on himself the refusal of the graces ; he assured him he was not displeased at his request, since noble minds are always accompanied with lawful ambition ; but he hoped that he would patiently wait the time of favour, and allow him to do all things in his own manner. ‡

Refusal.

This refusal ill corresponded with the estimate which Wentworth had formed of his deserts. While he submissively thanked the king for his gracious reply, § he could not refrain from expressing his chagrin in a letter to Lord Cottington, his colleague in administration. His application for the earldom was indeed a secret lodged in his own

* King to Wentworth, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 159, 160.

† Ibid. p. 165.

‡ Ibid. p. 332.

§ Ibid. p. 341.

breast ; but he dwelt on his expences, his difficulties, his need of the royal protection and countenance. “ Yet I am resolved,” said he, “ to complain of nothing : I have been something unprosperous, slowly heard, and as coldly answered.” *

The apprehensions of Charles also disappointed him in a favourite part of his policy. By great exertion and consummate address, he had been enabled to procure a parliament, balanced as he desired, and completely subservient to his wishes. He understood the value of such an instrument in procuring a ready submission to his measures ; and a change of circumstances might prevent his obtaining a new representation equally desirable. These considerations he strongly represented to the king, earnestly requesting that he might be allowed to defer the dissolution of the Parliament, and continue it by prorogation. † But with this request Charles could not prevail on himself to comply. He had found his English Parliaments always mild and temperate at the outset, but wrought up to obstinacy and rage before their close. Dreading for Ireland a catastrophe which he had been unable to avert in England, he urged Wentworth to get rid of this formidable assembly, while the members retained their good humour. “ My rea-

Thwarted in his wish to continue the Parliament.

* King to Wentworth, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 354.

† *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 353.

sons," said he, "are grounded on my experience of parliaments here: they are of the nature of cats, they ever grow curst with age; so that if ye will have good of them, put them off handsomely when they come to any age, for young ones are ever most tractable." *

His measures for conformity.

Notwithstanding these disappointments, Wentworth persisted in giving new proofs of his zeal and devotion. Among other schemes for consolidating the power of the sovereign, he conceived the difficult one of reducing all the people of Ireland to a conformity in religion. Theological differences were, he saw, the chief cause of their internal dissensions; priests and Jesuits the active promoters of sedition; † their followers were the principal opposers of subordination and improvement; from all which he concluded, that "the introduction of conformity was by far the greatest service which, in that kingdom, could be rendered to the crown." ‡ In these sentiments he was confirmed by Archbishop Laud, who did not cease urging him to go *thorough and thorough* with the pious work. §

* King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 365.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 431. ‡ Ibid. p. 367.

§ Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 111, 156, 329. Laud was no less eager for the application of his favourite maxim in the state than in the church. "For the state," writes he to Wentworth, "I am absolutely for *thorough*; but I see both thick and thin

The end which Wentworth pursued was unfortunately unattainable, but his means were far more rational than those usually adopted by projectors of conformity. Amidst the public disorders, many of the churches had fallen to ruin ; the incomes of the clergy were impaired by long leases and fraudulent appropriations of their lands ; and, as no inducement was held out to men of education and character to follow the church, the ignorance and profligacy of numbers of the clergy corresponded with their poverty. To remedy these evils was, in Wentworth's opinion, the first and most indispensable step towards conformity.* "To attempt it," said he, "before the decays of the material churches be repaired, and an able clergy provided, that so there may be wherewith to receive, instruct, and keep the people, were as a man going to warfare without ammunition or arms."† With views equally rational, he proposed to introduce civilization and sound religion by watching over the education of youth. He took measures to prevent the children of Catholics from being sent to foreign convents for their education ; he endeavoured to procure throughout the island the erection of Protestant schools, with proper endowments, and able

stays somebody, where I conceive it should not ; and it is impossible for me to go *thorough* alone."

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 172. † Ibid. p. 187.

teachers ; and while he thus provided for the instruction of the young, he attempted to remedy the neglect of the old, by vigorous penalties against non-residence. * Penal statutes, as a means of conversion, he estimated at their just value ; for he declared fines on nonconformity to be “ an engine rather to draw money out of men’s pockets, than to raise a right belief in their hearts.” † All precipitate attempts to enforce conformity he reprobated ; and resolutely opposed the violent measures which the bishops meditated against Catholic recusants. ‡

In the execution of his schemes for the church, Wentworth repeatedly found it necessary to employ that brief and peremptory procedure which had already proved so effectual in Ireland. Those who had engrossed the lands and tithes of the church were unwilling to restore them ; the common law protected the possessors of long leases ; and the incumbent clergy were eager to enrich their relatives by such leases at the expence of their successors. But Wentworth proceeded boldly, in the name and with the authority of the king. He removed the decision of ecclesiastical rights from the courts of common law to the Castle Chamber ; he compelled the Earl of Cork, so conspicu-

* Strafford’s Letters, p. 393. Vol. II. p. 7. † Ibid. p. 39.

‡ Ibid. Vol. I. p. 75, 172. Vol. II. p. 39.

ous for his rank and influence, to restore an annual revenue of two thousand pounds, which had been obtained from the church ; and when he understood that the Bishop of Killala was making underhand bargains to defraud his see, he sent for him into his presence, and told him sternly, that he deserved to have his surplice pulled over his ears, and to be turned out on a stipend of four nobles a-year. By this resolute behaviour, he procured a speedy restoration of lands and tithes, and a ready obedience to the commission now issued for the repair of churches. *

His next endeavour was, in conformity with the desire of Laud, to introduce a strict uniformity among all Protestants. The same ecclesiastical disputes, which divided the people of England into churchmen and puritans, had agitated the Protestants of Ireland. Some were willing to retain the rites and ceremonies of the English church, while others pressed for a farther reform. Archbishop Usher, a man of uncommon moderation and virtue, zealously applied himself to devise a remedy for these evils ; and succeeded in drawing up a list of articles which were received almost unanimously. But the canons of the Irish church, as it was now called, were far from acceptable to Laud. They re-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 151, 156, 171, 380.

ceded from popery as much as he had approached to it ; and they tended to withdraw a whole kingdom from its immediate dependence on the metropolitan of England. Determined to supersede these articles by the canons of the English church, Wentworth applied to Usher ; and that meek prelate, averse to all contention, agreed, not only to renounce his own work, but to use his influence for the same purpose with the convocation. When the question was proposed before that assembly, the bishops seemed willing to gratify the lord deputy by compliance ; but the lower house, strongly attached to their own canons, appointed a committee to discuss the articles submitted to their acceptance, and appeared resolved to admit only such of them as corresponded with their own opinions. Wentworth lost no time in disconcerting this opposition : he commanded the chairman of the committee to deliver up to him the book with their proceedings ; and gave orders that no report should be made. He next notified to the convocation that they must cease to mention the Irish canons : and while he permitted the question to be put only on the English articles, he insisted that the members should express their assent or dissent by a simple vote, without presuming to enter on any discussion. The clergy, confounded by this imperious proceeding, received the mandates of their go-

vernor in silent submission ; and only one dissenting voice was heard to assert their independence. *

To gratify Laud, Wentworth engaged in some still more gratuitous contests. Among his pious researches, Laud had discovered that the communion table, which was usually placed in the most convenient part of the church, ought, according to the Romish form, to be invariably situated at the east end of the chancel, and known by the name of the altar. Unluckily, in the cathedral of Dublin, the family monument of the Earl of Cork happened to occupy this devoted spot. Laud, informed of this, remonstrated against the profanation ; the Earl defended the repository of his ancestors ; and the task of asserting the cause of the church ultimately fell to the vigour of Wentworth. †

But his most noted departure from his usual prudence in matters of religion, was the introduction of the court of high commission, whose oppressive and impolitic severities in England had called forth his own remonstrances. ‡ The objects

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 343, 344. Wentworth, in relating these circumstances to Laud, humorously adverts to the clamour which these proceedings would excite in England. "I am not ignorant," says he, "that my stirring herein will be strangely reported, and censured on that side ; and how I shall be able to sustain myself against your Prynnes, and Pims, and Bens, with the rest of that generation of odd names and natures, the Lord knows."

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 211, &c.

‡ Ibid. Vol. II. p. 159.

which he proposed by this innovation were political as well as religious ; to watch over the respectability and usefulness of the clergy ; to reform and support the ecclesiastical courts ; to bring the people to a conformity of religion, and “in the way to all these, raise, perhaps, a good revenue to the crown.” * Nor did this dangerous engine produce pernicious effects while under his vigilant control ; and Wentworth was enabled to make the proud and singular boast that, during his government in Ireland, “not the hair of a man’s head was touched for the free exercise of his conscience.” †

Introduc-
tion of the
English
laws.

Whatever might be the effect of introducing the religion of England, the introduction of English law was a benefit not to be disputed. By the act of Poynings, all the English statutes, to the time of Henry the Seventh, had been established in Ireland ; Wentworth now procured the adoption of all subsequent acts, with the exception of a few penal statutes, which were deemed inexpedient. ‡ Yet, even in the administration of justice, he kept in view his grand objects, the power and profit of the crown. At first he found frequent occasion to complain of the stubborn independence of the courts of common law, and to remove causes from

* Strafford’s Letters, Vol. I. p. 187.

† Ibid. Vol. II. p. 112.

‡ Ibid. p. 18. Radcliffe’s Essay.

their jurisdiction to his Castle Chamber : * but at length he was able to establish a complete control over the legal officers ; † and could boast to the king, “ that the ministers of justice were now contained in proper subordination to the crown ; that they ministered wholly to uphold the sovereignty ; that they carried a direct aspect upon the prerogative of his majesty ; and squinted not aside upon the vulgar and vain opinions of the populace.” ‡

The military establishment of Ireland engaged the particular attention of Wentworth. He found the troops without clothes, without arms, without ammunition ; a terror to the inhabitants, only from their licentiousness ; and equally deficient in numbers and discipline. By indefatigable exertion, all these defects were speedily remedied. The regi-

Amelioration of the military establishment.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 202. When he demanded for himself and his privy-council the power of deciding causes between private parties, he said, “ I know very well the common lawyers will be passionately against it, who are wont to put such a prejudice on all other professions, as if none were to be trusted, or capable to administer justice but themselves. But how well this suits with monarchy, when they monopolize all to be governed by their year books, you in England have a costly experience : and I am sure his majesty's absolute power is not weaker in this kingdom, where hitherto the deputy and council have had a stroke with them.”

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 173. “ I know no reason,” writes he to Laud, “ why you may not as well rule the common lawyers in England as I do here : and yet that I do, and will do in all that concerns my master's service, at the peril of my head.”

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Other plans for the permanent increase of the revenue were pursued by Wentworth. Under his diligent superintendence, the produce of the customs rose, in four years, from twelve thousand pounds a year to forty thousand, and were still in a state of rapid advancement. † This amelioration proceeded in part from an improved method of collection, ‡ but more from the encouragement which he afforded to trade. By arming proper vessels for the protection of the coasts, he put an end to the piracies which had extended to the very harbours of the island: § and the national com-

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But the introduction of the statutes of Wills and Uses might be considered an equal benefit to the crown and the subject. Means had been found to disappoint the king, by fraudulent conveyances of those feudal aids which were still held legal ; and by the same arts infinite confusion had been introduced into the tenure of property. Widows were deprived of their jointures, and heirs of their inheritances, without knowing whom to sue for the recovery of their rights. By means of certain statutes, which Wentworth with difficulty induced the parliament to enact, these disorders were remedied, and the king's fines, in the Court of Wards, received an increase of ten thousand pounds a year. ‡

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ceded from popery as much as he had approached to it ; and they tended to withdraw a whole kingdom from its immediate dependence on the metropolitan of England. Determined to supersede these articles by the canons of the English church, Wentworth applied to Usher ; and that meek prelate, averse to all contention, agreed, not only to renounce his own work, but to use his influence for the same purpose with the convocation. When the question was proposed before that assembly, the bishops seemed willing to gratify the lord deputy by compliance ; but the lower house, strongly attached to their own canons, appointed a committee to discuss the articles submitted to their acceptance, and appeared resolved to admit only such of them as corresponded with their own opinions. Wentworth lost no time in disconcerting this opposition : he commanded the chairman of the committee to deliver up to him the book with their proceedings ; and gave orders that no report should be made. He next notified to the convocation that they must cease to mention the Irish canons : and while he permitted the question to be put only on the English articles, he insisted that the members should express their assent or dissent by a simple vote, without presuming to enter on any discussion. The clergy, confounded by this imperious proceeding, received the mandates of their go-

vernor in silent submission ; and only one dissenting voice was heard to assert their independence. *

To gratify Laud, Wentworth engaged in some still more gratuitous contests. Among his pious researches, Laud had discovered that the communion table, which was usually placed in the most convenient part of the church, ought, according to the Romish form, to be invariably situated at the east end of the chancel, and known by the name of the altar. Unluckily, in the cathedral of Dublin, the family monument of the Earl of Cork happened to occupy this devoted spot. Laud, informed of this, remonstrated against the profanation ; the Earl defended the repository of his ancestors ; and the task of asserting the cause of the church ultimately fell to the vigour of Wentworth. †

But his most noted departure from his usual prudence in matters of religion, was the introduction of the court of high commission, whose oppressive and impolitic severities in England had called forth his own remonstrances. ‡ The objects

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 343, 344. Wentworth, in relating these circumstances to Laud, humorously adverts to the clamour which these proceedings would excite in England. "I am not ignorant," says he, "that my stirring herein will be strangely reported, and censured on that side ; and how I shall be able to sustain myself against your Prynnes, and Pims, and Bens, with the rest of that generation of odd names and natures, the Lord knows."

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 211, &c.

‡ Ibid. Vol. II. p. 159.

which he proposed by this innovation were political as well as religious ; to watch over the respectability and usefulness of the clergy ; to reform and support the ecclesiastical courts ; to bring the people to a conformity of religion, and “ in the way to all these, raise, perhaps, a good revenue to the crown.” * Nor did this dangerous engine produce pernicious effects while under his vigilant control ; and Wentworth was enabled to make the proud and singular boast that, during his government in Ireland, “ not the hair of a man’s head was touched for the free exercise of his conscience.” †

Introduc-
tion of the
English
laws.

Whatever might be the effect of introducing the religion of England, the introduction of English law was a benefit not to be disputed. By the act of Poynings, all the English statutes, to the time of Henry the Seventh, had been established in Ireland ; Wentworth now procured the adoption of all subsequent acts, with the exception of a few penal statutes, which were deemed inexpedient. ‡ Yet, even in the administration of justice, he kept in view his grand objects, the power and profit of the crown. At first he found frequent occasion to complain of the stubborn independence of the courts of common law, and to remove causes from

* *Strafford’s Letters*, Vol. I. p. 187.

† *Ibid.* Vol. II. p. 112.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 18. *Radcliffe’s Essay*.

their jurisdiction to his Castle Chamber : * but at length he was able to establish a complete control over the legal officers ; † and could boast to the king, “ that the ministers of justice were now contained in proper subordination to the crown ; that they ministered wholly to uphold the sovereignty ; that they carried a direct aspect upon the prerogative of his majesty ; and squinted not aside upon the vulgar and vain opinions of the populace.” ‡

The military establishment of Ireland engaged the particular attention of Wentworth. He found the troops without clothes, without arms, without ammunition ; a terror to the inhabitants, only from their licentiousness ; and equally deficient in numbers and discipline. By indefatigable exertion, all these defects were speedily remedied. The regi-

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were not generally dispelled even at a later period, he perceived that the commodities of the one kingdom corresponded admirably with the wants of the other, and called for a speedy extension of their commercial intercourse. He declared it as his opinion, that the reciprocal interests of Spain and the British empire corresponded better than those of any two nations in Europe ; he urged the king to cultivate a good understanding with that power ; he endeavoured to promote the same object by his private connections ; and he had even the industry to draw up, from information communicated by his commercial agents, a statement of the nature and quantity of the commodities which each port in Spain could either receive from Ireland, or give in return. The great annual fleets to the colonies, which were often detained in the Spanish harbours from want of provisions, could, he observed, be supplied far more conveniently and cheaply from Ireland than from any other country of Europe ; and in this trade he foresaw an inexhaustible source of national riches. *

The linen
manufac-
ture.

But the scheme from which the most permanent benefits have accrued to Ireland was the establishment of the linen manufacture. When he first undertook the government of that country, Wentworth learnt, from his inquiries into the state of

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 93, 103, 299, &c.

the island, that no article for export was manufactured there, unless a small quantity of coarse woollen yarn. Unwilling, by encouraging this branch, to interfere with the staple of England, he formed the project of introducing the general cultivation of flax, and directing the industry of the natives to the manufacture of linen. At his own expence he imported and sowed a quantity of superior flax-seed; and, the crop succeeding to his expectation, he, next year, expended a thousand pounds for the same purpose, erected several looms, procured workmen from France and Flanders, and at length was enabled to ship for Spain, at his own risk, the first investment of linen ever exported from Ireland.* Exulting in the success of this favourite scheme, he foretold that it would prove the greatest means of enrichment which Ireland had ever enjoyed; † and his sagacity is amply attested by the industry and wealth which the linen manufacture continues to diffuse over that portion of the empire.

If it was fortunate for Ireland that this enterprise succeeded, it was equally fortunate that another of his plans proved abortive. He had laid it down as a maxim, “that a governor of that island, to serve the king completely, ought not

The monopoly of salt.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 93, Vol. II. 19, 109.

† Ibid. Vol. I. p. 473.

only to promote the prosperity of its inhabitants, but to render them so dependent on the crown, as not even to be able to subsist without its good pleasure." * By the substitution of the linen for the woollen manufacture, he considered this object as in some degree effected ; as the Irish, on a quarrel with England, might be deprived of woollen cloth, an article of the first necessity. † But as their salt, without which they could neither carry on their victualling trade, nor cure their ordinary provisions, was either manufactured by patentees, or imported from abroad, it occurred to him that the king, by monopolizing the sale of this article, would both obtain a large increase of revenue, and reduce the Irish to complete dependence. ‡ Were the internal manufacture of the article, as he proposed, abolished, it would be difficult to defraud the king's revenue by smuggling a commodity so bulky, and so perishable at sea. This expedient, combined with the prohibition of the woollen manufacture, would reduce the Irish to entire dependence, as it would at all times be in his majesty's power to deprive them of food and clothing. The revenue would be greatly benefited, since salt was an article which the people must of necessity purchase at any expence, and the king might, at plea-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 93.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.* p. 93. 182.

sure, enhance the price. He instanced the profit and ascendancy which the King of France derived from the *gabelle* : and to show his firm confidence in the success of the project, he offered immediately to farm the monopoly at six thousand pounds a year.* These arguments, however, could not induce the court to risk the odium of such a measure ; and Wentworth has derived from his proposal only the reputation of having conceived a plan which has uniformly given at least a temporary strength to despotic governments.†

The tranquillity of Ireland was unfortunately interrupted by the bold measures of Wentworth to increase the royal demesnes by the discovery of defective titles. By researches among old records, it was found that the whole province of Connaught, on the forfeiture of its Irish chieftain, had come, at a distant period, into the possession of the crown. It had, indeed, been all granted away, at

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 192.

† The only encouragement which Wentworth seems to have obtained from the court in this scheme, is a letter from the Lord Treasurer, advising him, " if he hears no more of the salt business, to take his own way, and not delay the king's service." Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 333. But, as the Lord Treasurer, from being his most zealous patron, was now become his enemy, on account of Wentworth's greater intimacy with Laud, it is not improbable that this unofficial advice might be given with no good intentions. At least the Lord Deputy appears to have prosecuted the scheme no farther. Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 340.

different times, by formal patents from the sovereign ; but the ingenuity of the court lawyers soon discovered that some flaw or other might be found in all these titles. During the former reign, when James was inflamed with an immoderate desire for extended settlements, some measures of this nature had been suggested ; but it had appeared too hazardous an attempt to dispossess a fourth part of the proprietors of Ireland on formal quibbles, and obsolete pretensions. By the *graces*, which had received the sanction of Charles, it was expressly stipulated that the titles of the Connaught landholders should be recognised as valid ; and they had thus every assurance of their estates, which deeds of law, and the word of a monarch, could bestow. But Wentworth, while he prevented the grace respecting Connaught from passing into a law, engaged to Charles that he would devise some means or other to reduce that province into the possession of the crown ; * and being now furnished by the lawyers with the pretext which he desired, he was not to be deterred by popular clamour from rendering an acceptable service to the monarch.

He first proceeded to the county of Roscommon, and summoned a jury of such proprietors as were able to pay a large fine to the crown, if they should

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 342.

happen to prove refractory.* He informed them that his appeal to their decision on the present occasion was an act of mere courtesy; that, in a case so clear, his majesty could have recovered by an ordinary process in the Court of Exchequer; that, if they looked to their own interests, they ought to find the king's title, and throw themselves on his bounty; but that, if they rather considered the profit of the crown, they ought stoutly to refuse the demands of justice, and leave his majesty to pursue his course, unembarrassed by the claims of ready obedience. The jury, aware that the threats of Wentworth were not empty words, judged it most prudent to purchase his favour by a ready submission; and the juries afterwards summoned in Mayo and Sligo delivered up their counties with equal alacrity to the crown. Their obedience was rewarded by a proclamation, assuring them that they should be permitted to purchase indefeasible titles by an easy composition.†

Wentworth, however, was informed that he might look to a very different reception in Galway. The inhabitants of that county, composed chiefly

* Wentworth, in his official dispatches, states that he had purposely composed the jury of the principal inhabitants, that "they might answer the king a round fine in the Castle Chamber, in case they should prevaricate." Ibid. p. 442.

† Ibid.

of aboriginal Irish, and adhering, almost without exception, to the Romish religion, were stimulated to the maintenance of their tenures, by their priests, their lawyers, and, above all, by their hereditary governor the Earl of St Alban's and Clanricarde. Undismayed at their reported opposition, Wentworth declared he should rejoice if they afforded his majesty so fair an occasion of augmenting his revenue, and strengthening his authority. * He summoned a jury here on the same principle as in the other counties : but, finding them immoveable by his arguments, or his threats, he resolved to make a striking example of the first resolute opposition which he had encountered. By his own authority he fined the sheriff a thousand pounds, for selecting such an ill-affected jury : he cited the jurors into the Castle Chamber, and fined them four thousand pounds each : and, by his representations at court against the Earl of Clanricarde, made him severely suffer for his obnoxious interference. †

By these imperious proceedings, the lord deputy gave rise to great discontents ; ‡ and, in the Earl of Clanricarde, he had incensed a nobleman, known and respected at court, and provided with the means of diffusing the most invidious repre-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 444, 450.

† *Ibid.* p. 451, 454.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 504.

sentation of these transactions. Yet, confirmed by fresh assurances of the royal approbation and support, * Wentworth remained undismayed; and the unfortunate violence of his temper quickly aggravated the prejudice which he strove not to allay.

Several harsh and unprecedented stretches of ^{Arbitrary measures.} authority by Wentworth and his council had excited severe animadversion. He had been repeatedly threatened with a Felton or Ravallac, † and even his friend Laud, though so great an admirer of "thorough" exertions of power, began to intimate a wish that an appearance of moderation might be mingled with his vigour. ‡ But his friends received a new alarm from the severity of his proceedings against Francis Annesley, Lord Mountnorris. That nobleman held the office of vice-treasurer in Ireland, and had enjoyed the confidence of Wentworth, on his accession to the government. A coolness, however, had arisen between them, and was speedily aggravated into a serious quarrel. The deputy represented to the king some fees and offices of which his antagonist might be deprived, without disadvantage to the service: § and while the vice-treasurer found his emoluments diminished, his resentment was yet

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 465.

† Ibid. p. 371, 412.

‡ Ibid. p. 479.

§ Ibid. p. 392.

more inflamed by an unsuccessful attempt to fix on him the charge of corruption in the exercise of his office,

While this mutual animosity was in a course of daily aggravation, a serious result arose from a trivial incident. As Wentworth sat one day in the presence chamber, during a severe fit of the gout, one of his retinue occasioned him much pain, by accidentally moving a stool against his foot. The incident having been mentioned at the Lord Chancellor's table, one of the guests observed to Lord Mountnorris, who happened to be present, that the offender was his namesake and kinsman. "Perhaps," replied his lordship, "it was done in revenge of the public affront which I have received from the lord deputy; but I have a brother, who would not have taken *such* a revenge."*

April 18,
1636.

Trial of
Mount-
norris.

July 21st.

Dec. 12th.

These unguarded words, when reported by some officious courtiers to Wentworth, appeared in his eyes pregnant with sedition. He privately procured the king's commission to bring his antagonist to trial; but deferred it till a full security added to the severity of his vengeance. At length, without any intimation of his designs, he one evening sent a summons to the principal military officers in Dublin, and among the rest Lord Mountnorris, to

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 187. Nalson's Collections, Vol. I. p. 59.

attend him next morning at a council of war. After they had taken their places, the lord deputy, as commander in chief and president, informed the astonished assembly, that he had called them together to receive, at their hands, reparation and justice against Lord Mountnorris. He produced a written statement of the words spoken at the chancellor's table: he proved the allegation by witnesses: he recounted two articles of war, by one of which, disgraceful words spoken of any person in the army were punishable with imprisonment, and with ignominious dismissal from the service; while by the other, death was awarded to any individual, who, by speech or actions, should stir up mutiny, or "impeach obedience to the principal officer." He maintained that the expressions of Mountnorris were amenable to both these laws; and that, as a captain in the service, he was properly brought to the summary justice of a court martial.

In vain was this course of procedure objected to by Lord Mountnorris, who had now risen from the council table, and presented himself in the usual station of the accused. In vain did he urge that he was taken wholly unawares; that he ought to be allowed time to prepare his defence, with the advice of counsel; that words, spoken in the course of conversation, at the distance of several months,

could with difficulty be ascertained ; and that he could produce upwards of twenty witnesses to prove that there was nothing malicious or offensive, either in the expressions he had used, or in the mode of uttering them. Wentworth replied, that none of his requisitions could be granted according to the forms of a court martial : that he must simply confess or deny the facts ; and that the council must then directly proceed to vote him innocent or guilty of the charge.

The members of the court, though awed by the tone and presence of their governor, revolted from the idea of condemning to death a peer and a member of the government, for so trivial an offence. To avoid the capital part of the sentence, they requested that the lord deputy would permit the two charges to be separated : but he sternly replied that they must vote the offender guilty of “ both or of none.” Even Lord Moore, who had originally given the information, and now appeared as a witness for the prosecution, after having delivered his testimony, was commanded by Wentworth to resume his seat in the court, and judge the man whom he had accused. The council proceeded to deliberate and vote, under the eye of the lord deputy ; and their sentence adjudged Mountnorris to be imprisoned, deprived of all his offices, ignominiously dismissed from the army, incapacitated

from ever again serving ; and finally, to be shot, or beheaded, at the pleasure of the general. *

The report of a sentence, so cruel and so unjustly obtained, filled the empire with indignation and clamour. Wentworth's friends in London entreated him to furnish them with some satisfactory explanation of reports, to which they could not listen with patience, and which were avouched in a manner they durst not contradict.† The concealment of the charge for so many months ; the excessive disproportion of the punishment to the offence ; the admission of a witness to sit as judge ; the presence and control of the accuser during the whole trial ; these were all recounted as incapable of palliation. Even the conduct of Buckingham, the great object of national hatred, was advantageously contrasted with that of Wentworth : it was remembered that at the Isle of Rhé, the duke had merely dismissed from the army some officers who had conspired against him ; while Wentworth had caused a colleague in office and a former friend to be sentenced to death for an imprudent expression.‡

The apologies of the lord deputy only showed a consciousness of guilt. As his principal defence

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 500, 501. *Rushworth*, Vol. VIII. p. 187. et seq. *Clarendon*, Vol. I. p. 220, et seq.

† *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 508. ‡ *Ibid.* p. 510.

he urged that he had been merely passive in the transaction ; that he had not voted, nor even suffered his brother to vote ; that he had sat unheeded and silent while the council deliberated on their sentence ; that he had never intended to put Mountnorris to death, but only to punish his insolence ; and that he had united with the members of the court in obtaining a pardon for the capital part of the offence. * His behaviour subsequent to the trial seemed an aggravation of his misconduct. After the sentence was passed, he told Mountnorris, that now, if he chose, he had only to order execution ; that he would, however, petition for his life, adding, " that he would sooner lose his hand than Mountnorris should lose his head." † His exultation, indeed, was scarcely limited either by prudence or decency ; for he exclaimed before the whole court, that " the sentence was just and noble, and for his part he would not lose his share of the honour of it." ‡

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 498, 499, 505, &c.

† Strafford's Trial, p. 190.

‡ Ibid. p. 195. Lady Mountnorris was a near relative of Wentworth's beloved wife, Arabella Hollis, whose premature death had lately caused him the most bitter affliction. Trusting to the influence of this strong tie, she became an intercessor for her condemned husband, and addressed the following pathetic letter to Wentworth.

" MY LORD,

" I beseech your lordship, for the tender mercy of God,

But the most singular part of the transaction remains yet to be mentioned. Wentworth felt the necessity of exerting himself to conciliate the English court, and to procure the offices of Mountnorris for his favourites. To effect the latter, he proposed to distribute six thousand pounds among the principal ministers ; * but Lord Cottington, an

take off your heavy hand from my dear lord ; and, for her sake, who is with God, be pleased not to make me and my poor infants miserable, as we must of necessity be by the hurt you do to him. God knows, my lord, I am a distressed poor woman, and know not what to say more, than to beg upon my knees, with my homely prayers and tears, that it will please the Almighty to incline your lordship's heart to mildness towards him : for if your lordship continue my lord in restraint, and lay disgraces upon him, I have too much cause to fear your lordship will bring a speedy end to his life and troubles, and make me and all mine for ever miserable. Good my lord, pardon these woeful lines of a disconsolate creature ; and be pleased, for Christ Jesus' sake, to take this my humble suit into your favourable consideration, and to have mercy upon me and mine ; and God will, I hope, reward it into the bosom of you, and your sweet children by my kinswoman : and for the memory of her, I beseech your lordship to compassionate the distressed condition of me,

“ Your lordship's most humble

“ and disconsolate servant,

“ JANE MOUNTNORRIS.”

This letter, which is inserted in Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. I. p. 449, is there endorsed with these words : “ A copy of Lady Mountnorris's letter to the Earl of Strafford, when her husband was in prison, under sentence of death, by martial law ; and he was so hard-hearted as to give her no relief.”

* According to general report, the distribution was to take place in the following manner :—to Lord Cottington, £2000 ; to the

old and dexterous courtier, to whom the business was intrusted, "fell upon the right way," as he informs us; and "gave the money to him who could really do the business, which was the king himself."* The present happened to prove opportune to his majesty, who was then in the act of purchasing an estate; and Wentworth, without delay, received an official letter, authorizing him to dispose of the offices according to his desire. †

Death of
Clanricarde
and others.

The approbation of the king might silence murmurs within the precincts of the palace, but it was far from suppressing the general expressions of reproach; and these unfortunately met with new excitements. The death of the Earl of Clanricarde, which took place about this time, was attributed to his despondency, arising from the ruin of his influence, and the danger of his fortune by the proceedings in Galway; ‡ and the fate of the sheriff of Galway, who died in the prison, to which he had been committed till the payment of his fine, was ascribed to the unjust author of his hardships. The first of these charges, indeed, Wentworth could treat with ridicule; "they might as well,"

Lord Privy Seal, L.1000; to the Marquis of Hamilton, L.1000; and the other L.2000 to the two secretaries. Letter from the Rev. Mr Garrard to Wentworth, in *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 508.

* Letter from Lord Cottington to Wentworth, in *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 511.

† Ibid. p. 512.

‡ *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 492.

says he, "have imputed to me for a crime, his being three score and ten years old." * But the death of the sheriff was not to be thus dismissed, coupled as it was with a false but specious report that Wentworth had refused bail, to the amount of forty thousand pounds, for the brother of Clanricarde. † One exaggeration now succeeded another; and he had the mortification to find it currently believed, that, on occasion of some displeasure, he had actually caned one Esmond, a ship-owner, to death. ‡ Wentworth was exceedingly alive to public opinion: the reports concerning his conduct, which both friends and enemies now brought to his ears, filled him with resentment and anguish; nor could the repeated advices of the king and of Laud, who intreated him to despise accusations which no one durst avow, subdue the anxiety excited by the general murmurs.

He was not, however, of a temper to sink tame-

* Letter from Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 492.

† The fate of the sheriff he seems to have viewed with perfect coolness; his only source of regret was the clamour it excited. "I am full of belief," says he in a letter to his friend Wandesford, "that they will lay the charge of Dancy the sheriff's death to me. My arrows are cruel that wound so mortally; but I should be sorry the king should lose his fine." Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 13.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 6. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 898.

ly, under popular clamour. Resolving to brave those rumours which he could not suppress, and to confound his enemies by the assumed intrepidity of conscious innocence, he requested leave of the king to come over to England. The subordination which he had established, and the dread of his speedy return, would, he trusted, prevent the discontents in Ireland from breaking out into any active opposition; and he hoped to bring back, in open and distinguished marks of royal approbation, an invincible bulwark to his authority.

Appearance
at court.
May 1636.

His reception at the English court was highly flattering; and when questioned by the king on the state of Ireland, the explanation of his measures was marked by all the address and vigour that he had shown in their execution. In a speech delivered before the king and the committee for Irish affairs, he gave a perspicuous and forcible description of all his principal improvements. He treated separately of the services which he had rendered to the church, to the army, to the revenue, to manufactures and commerce, to the laws, and the administration of justice. The former neglect of these departments he contrasted with their present flourishing condition; and augured still greater improvements from a continuance of his auspicious system. He showed his concern for Ireland by certain requisitions for its relief: and in proof of his devotion to his sovereign, he ex-

plained how all his measures tended to increase the revenue and authority of the crown. To divest this exposition of the appearance of presumption, he declared that if he had any merit, it was only that of a willing obedience. "I have been," he added, "a dead instrument in the hands of his majesty, without motion or effect, further than I have been guided by the gracious direction of my sovereign." He then adverted to the many calumnies circulated against him; and lamented, "the decayed and backsliding condition of Ireland when committed to his charge," which had rendered an appearance of severity indispensably necessary for his majesty's service. He "acknowledged his manifold infirmities, and his sovereign's great goodness, that had been pleased to pass by them, and to accept of his weak endeavours in the pursuit of his duty." In particular, he owned himself liable to a warmth and choler which he could not at all times temper and govern; yet, by the time some more cold winters had blown upon it, he should, he trusted, be able to master this unruly passion. Meantime, he would watch over it as well as he could; and he humbly intreated his majesty and their lordships to pardon any excesses into which it might unadvisedly and suddenly have led him; a grace which he requested with the more confidence, as the defects of his temper had

hitherto, he thanked God, injured no one but himself. *

The effect of this dexterous discourse corresponded fully to his hopes. The king declared that his conduct required no apology, that no unnecessary severity had been practised, that every thing had been done in the best manner for his service. The lords of the committee loaded him with applause; and all united in exhorting him to perfect the work which he had so successfully begun. Nor was the fame of his meritorious actions, and of his favour with the sovereign, confined to the court: it was quickly diffused over the capital and the kingdom, and his reputation among the partizans of the government became unbounded.

Zealous
support of
ship-money.

An opportunity immediately occurred of binding the king by new testimonies of his zeal. Among other expedients for raising supplies, without the intervention of parliament, recourse had been had to a new levy under the name of ship-money. The estimated expence of equipping a navy was apportioned among all the counties of England; and, under this pretext, less invidious, it was hoped,

* This account of his reception and discourse at court is given by Wentworth himself in a letter to his confidential friend, Wandesford, to whom he had committed the government of Ireland in his absence. It is inserted in *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 13 to 22. The Irish transactions to which it adverts have all been related in the text.

than either a subsidy or a loan, a general contribution was demanded. * Still, both the necessity of the imposition, and its amount, being left entirely at the discretion of the monarch, the payments were made with great repugnance ; and the aversion with which men shrink from rebellion, seemed alone to restrain the nation from resistance. In this state of things, Wentworth, as president of the council of York, was enabled to render an essential service to the court, by procuring the assent of all within his jurisdiction to the contribution. His activity and dexterity were attended with their wonted success ; and, while the officers of the revenue, in other parts of the kingdom, levied the imposition amidst murmurs and threats, he could send to the king as favourable accounts from York, as he had formerly transmitted from Ireland. “ In pursuit of your commands,” said he, “ I have effectually, both in public and private, recommended the justice and necessity of the shipping business, and so clearly shown it to be, not only for the honour of the kingdom in general, but for every man’s particular safety, that I am most confident the assessment this next year will be universally and cheerfully answered within this jurisdiction.” †

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 68.

† Letter from Wentworth to the King, in Strafford’s Letters, Vol. II. p. 26.

New peti-
tion for an
Earldom.

Amidst this accumulation of services, Wentworth felt increasing uneasiness that there appeared no indication of an intention to acknowledge his zeal by some public mark of royal favour. His exposition of his prosperous labours in Ireland had, indeed, been received with unbounded commendation; but this commendation had been confined to the walls of the council-chamber, and was known to the nation only by unaccredited report. Would it not be said, that if the king really held the services of Wentworth in such high estimation, he would evince it by the usual distinction of a superior title? If this cheap and ordinary reward were withheld, would it not be concluded that the king, though compelled by reasons of state to employ obliging expressions towards the lord deputy, was far from viewing his conduct with unqualified approbation? A superior title, therefore, now appeared to Wentworth, not only an object of gratification, but a necessary safeguard to his authority. Actuated by these considerations, he ventured, for the second time, to approach the king with a humble petition for some public mark of his favour, to refute the malicious insinuations of his enemies, and prove that his majesty disbelieved their calumnies.* Distrusting his own influence, after his former experience, he disclosed this desire of his heart to Laud; and intreated him to concur in

* Letter from Wentworth to the King, in Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 27.

earnestly urging his majesty to confer on him an earldom, or some other public mark of distinction. He represented to the archbishop the impolicy, as well as the hardship, of withholding this testimony of approbation; and assured him, that if he were sent back to Ireland, thus unrequited, it would shake his authority, and injure the public service.*

But the reasons which formerly led Charles to ^{Refused.} refuse this request were now exceedingly strengthened. Partly in the prosecution of the public service, partly for the gratification of his own violent passions, Wentworth had incurred a great additional load of public reproach, and Charles could perceive, that, whatever odium he removed from his minister, he must necessarily accumulate on himself. The more earnest the solicitation, the more insupportable the load, the less advisable was it for him to interfere. The lord deputy, though extremely sensible to public reproach, was not of a disposition to give way to despondency; and when the immediate preservation of a servant was not in question, it seemed imprudent for the king, in his present circumstances, to incur any odium which it was practicable to avoid. The reply of Charles was, therefore, so pointed and decisive as to bar all hopes of compliance. He assured Wentworth that the cause of his request, if known, would rather encourage than silence his enemies; that their ca-

* Wentworth to Laud, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 28.

lumnies would increase with the discovery of his apprehensions, and their attacks become more bold and dangerous when they perceived that they were feared. "The marks of my favour," continued he, "which stop malicious tongues, are neither places nor titles, but the little welcome I give to accusers, and the willing ear I give to my servants. This," added he, "is not to disparage these favours, but to show their proper use, which is not to quell envy, but to reward services. They have truly the effect of rewards, only when conferred by the master without the servant's importunity; and that otherwise men judged them to proceed rather from the servant's wit than the master's favour." With an attempt at pleasantry, ill-calculated to soften his refusal, he concluded thus: "I will end with a rule that may serve for a statesman, a courtier, or a lover,—never make an apology till you be accused." *

Mortification.

A repulse, conveyed in terms so unqualified, seems to have inflicted a deep wound on the mind of Wentworth. In his reply to the king, he dwelt on the intimations concerning his *fears* and *apprehensions*; and reminded his majesty, that, in the service of the crown at least, he had never betrayed timidity. To make the king sensible how ill his rewards corresponded with his merits, he in-

* King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 32.

formed his majesty that his jurisdiction in the northern counties was now so completely reconciled to ship-money, as to be fitted for setting an example to the rest of the kingdom ; and he advised, if the south were likely to prove refractory, to send down the first writs for the year to York, where there would be no opposition. *

The chagrin caused to Wentworth by this disappointment often broke out in his subsequent letters. On one occasion, where he urges his majesty to allow the public officers in Ireland a liberal per centage out of certain branches of the public revenue, with a view to quicken their activity, he continues : “ Admit me to say, reward well applied is of extreme advantage to the service of kings. It is most certain that not one man of very many serves his master for love, but for his own ends and preferment ; and that he is in the rank of the best servants, who can be content to serve his master together with himself. In fine, I am most confident, were your majesty purposed for a while to use the excellent wisdom God hath given you, in the constant, right, and quick application of rewards and punishments, it were a thing most easy for your servants, in a very few years, under your conduct and protection, so to settle all your affairs and dominions, as should render you, not only at

* Wentworth to the King, Vol. II. p. 36.

home, but abroad also, the most powerful king in Christendom." * To his private friends, and to Laud in particular, his expressions of mortification were more undisguised. † In a letter to Mr. George Butler he says, that, as to rewards and preferments, he must now look for them in the next world; "for, in good faith, George, all here below are grown wondrous indifferent." ‡

Return to
Ireland.
November
1636.

With these impressions, Wentworth returned to his government in Ireland. If he had failed to obtain those public marks of distinction, by which he hoped to confound and silence the voice of dissension, he at least found himself armed with ample authority to chastise every opposition to his power, or insult to his feelings. Mountnorris, and all who had appealed from his sentences to the English court, were remitted to his disposal; § and if he could resolve to endure the odium of arbitrary rule, without openly implicating the king, there seemed to be no restraint on the exercise of his power.

Subsequent
measures.

His subsequent measures in the government of Ireland were merely a continuation of those already described. The awe inspired by his vigour

* Wentworth to the King, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 41.

† Wentworth to Laud, Ibid. p. 169.

‡ Wentworth to Butler, Ibid. p. 40.

§ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 15.

confirmed the tranquillity it had procured; and under his vigilant eye the infant cultivation, manufactures, and commerce of the country, began to increase and prosper. While the subject enjoyed security, from the entire suppression of internal insurrections and depredations, the royal revenues, arising from produce and consumption, experienced a rapid increase. Nor did Wentworth cease to replenish the exchequer by rigorous inquiries into defective titles. He found means to make out the right of the king to the whole district of Ormond; and the O'Byrnes in Wicklow were obliged to redeem their large possessions from a similar award, by the payment of fifteen thousand pounds to the crown. By such means, of which some were as laudable as others were irreconcilable to justice, he procured an ample supply for the expenditure of his government, without any of those new demands or impositions which might have furnished an occasion to contest his authority. *

Ambition had not so wholly engrossed the mind of Wentworth, as to render him insensible to the softer passions of domestic life. His attachments, however, were more ardent than fortunate. About three years after the death of his first wife, he married Arabella Hollis, daughter to the Earl of Clare, and sister to the Honourable Denzil Hollis, who

Domestic
life.

July 1625.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 89, 97, 135, 175.

October
1631.

afterwards distinguished himself on the popular side in the reign of Charles the First, yet received a title from Charles the Second. This lady, of whose beauty and accomplishments contemporary writers speak with admiration, was beloved by her husband with all the characteristic ardour of his disposition. In the course of six years, she brought him two sons and three daughters; but the loss of the younger son, which happened soon after his birth, was followed by the more lamented death of the mother. So violent was the anguish which Wentworth experienced from this unexpected calamity, that his confidential friends remained with him continually for several days and nights, and were even then hardly able to overcome his despair. * Several years afterwards, when the Lady Clare requested that the education of her granddaughters might be committed to her charge, he delivered over those pledges of his tender affection, and recalled the incomparable virtues of their mother, with much sensibility and enthusiasm,†

The tender remembrance of Arabella Hollis did not, however, prevent the growth of another passion in the breast of Wentworth, who was still in the prime of life. Captivated with the charms of Elizabeth Rhodes, the daughter of Sir Godfrey

* Radcliffe's Essay. Ibid. p. 59, 60.

† Wentworth to Lady Clare, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 379.

Rhodes, an English gentleman of considerable rank and fortune, he resolved to make her his wife: and though reluctant to own in public his attachment to a female of inferior family, yet he allowed only a year to elapse, from the death of his former wife, before the private solemnization of his third nuptials. It was not till his arrival in Ireland, whither the lady was conveyed by his friend Radcliffe, at an interval of several months from his own journey, that he openly acknowledged her as his wife. * On this occasion, he thought it necessary to apologise to Laud for a step which might appear imprudent; and, having explained his reasons for the match, he hinted that the prelate would do well to imitate his example. Laud, in reply, wished him and his consort much felicity, and expressed his confidence that the step had been taken after due deliberation: but as to his following the same course, "I must needs," said he, "confess to your lordship, that having been married to a very troublesome and unquiet wife before, I should be ill-advised now, being above sixty, to go marry another of a more wayward and troublesome generation."† Elizabeth Rhodes, however, bore her new dignities with incomparable meekness and humility. Far from acquiring arrogance from her unexpected elevation, she remain-

October
1632.

* Radcliffe's Essay. † Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 125.

ed impressed with an overpowering sense of her husband's superiority, and accounted it a degree of presumption even to approach him with her letters. This lowliness was by no means displeasing to Wentworth, and was repaid by a conduct uniformly condescending and kind. In a letter, where he endeavours to remove the excess of her timidity, he tells her, "it is no presumption for you to write me; the fellowship of marriage ought to produce sentiments of love and equality, rather than any apprehension." *

Recreations.

In the earlier part of life, Wentworth had entered freely into the social amusements usual among persons of his rank; but short and uncertain intervals of relaxation were now with difficulty snatched from the pressure of public affairs. Hawking was his favourite field sport, and finding the northern part of Wicklow well adapted to this amusement, he erected there a mansion for his summer residence. It was built of wood, and the expence did not exceed twelve hundred pounds; yet so magnificent did it appear to the rude natives of Wicklow, that, to silence the envy excited by vulgar rumour, he gave out that it was intended for the reception of his majesty, when he should find leisure to enjoy the exercise of hunting in this

* These letters from Wentworth to his wife are copied in the *Biographia Britannica* from the originals in the Museum Thoresbianaum.

part of his dominions. * The games of primero and mayo, at which he played with uncommon skill, he indulged in only during the Christmas festivities, or occasionally after supper, the hour of which corresponded to the fashionable dinner hour of the present age. It was in the interval between this meal and the hours devoted to sleep, that he found his chief period of recreation. He would retire at times with his company to an inner room, and continue there for hours, relating anecdotes with a freedom and pleasantry which surprised those guests who till then had seen him distant, ceremonious, and haughty, amidst his official avocations.

Yet during his most unguarded moments of his Temperance larity, Wentworth never indulged to excess in the pleasures of the table. He never, we are assured, in the course of his life, degraded himself by one instance of intoxication. In Ireland, where excessive drinking was an epidemical vice, he thought it expedient to set a strict example, and, on those public occasions which had often proved a scene of intemperate riot, his rule was to drink only the healths of the king, the queen, and the prince. There was no fault which he accounted more dangerous, or which he reprehended more severely in his servants, than a proneness to intoxication. †

Amidst his various plans for the increase of the

Attention
his private
fortune.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 106. † Radcliffe's Essay.

public revenue, Wentworth did not altogether overlook the improvement of his private fortune. In conjunction with his friend Sir George Radcliffe, he farmed the Irish customs; and, in consequence of their amelioration from the flourishing state of the country, there was derived from them, in a few years, an annual profit of eight thousand pounds, of which two thirds fell to his share. * The monopoly of tobacco, which he also farmed, proved, from the increasing consumption of the article, productive beyond expectation; and the lands in Ireland, which he purchased at an inconsiderable price, became, under proper cultivation, a promising source of wealth. †

Integrity. It deserves to be remarked to his honour, that, with the exception of the tobacco monopoly, none of the means by which he increased his fortune were liable to censure, or even to suspicion. Far from sharing the plunder of the demesnes which he had recovered for the crown, he strenuously exerted himself to prevent their falling a prey to the rapacity of other courtiers. In the exercise of his office, he refused even the customary presents; and the English court was amused with an anecdote of the servant of a person of distinction, who had been sent to him with a present, and who was

* Wentworth to Laud, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 137.

† Ibid. p. 106.

so indignant at an unexpected refusal, that he, in his turn, refused the gratuity of Wentworth. * It was his frequent boast, that he did not come into the service to repair a broken fortune; and that the public had never suffered from his desire to bequeath inordinate wealth to his posterity.

His judgment in the management of his private *Splendour* affairs appears the more conspicuous, when we consider the magnificence of his mode of living. At his own charge he maintained a retinue of fifty attendants, besides his troop of sixty horsemen, which he originally raised and equipped at an expence of six thousand pounds, and which continued to cost him twelve hundred pounds a-year. † His taste for building added considerably to his expenditure. Besides repairing and beautifying his several residences as governor, he erected a palace at Naas in Kildare, for the reception of the king, as he declared, since it appeared to him derogatory to Ireland, that this part of the empire should alone present no accommodations to its sovereign. ‡

In dwelling on the private scenes of Wentworth's life, we are apt to regret that he should ever have quitted a condition where he might have enjoyed

* Secretary Windebank to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 160.

† Wentworth to Cottington, *Ibid.* p. 128.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 106.

respectability without envy. Such a reflection seems often to have recurred to his own mind, amidst the uneasy aspirations of ambition. Even while he exults in the prosperous situation of his government, he adds, "yet I could possess myself with much more satisfaction and repose under my own roof, than with all the preferment and power which the favour of a crown can communicate." * Amidst his most ambitious plans, we find him looking forward to some happier period, when, escaping from the fatigues of office, he should be enabled to deliver himself up wholly to retirement and reflection. "Neither preferments, nor whatsoever else men most esteem in this world, will, I trust, tie me to the importunities of public affairs during my whole life, or so far infatuate my senses as to make me neglect the cares of a future and permanent state." †

Bodily infirmities.

These, however, were only the transient suggestions of bodily sickness or mental depression: Even while he uttered them, he was soliciting new honours, and prosecuting some of his least justifiable enterprises. The agitations of ambition had not only unfitted his mind for tranquillity, but had induced several premature infirmities. During

* Wentworth to Sir Edward Stanhope, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 303.

† Wentworth to Mr George Butler. *Ibid.* p. 420.

the first years of his administration in Ireland, his extreme solicitude for the accomplishment of his plans had led him to forego all his usual recreations; and his anxiety to gain the approbation of the English court had even tempted him to write all his voluminous dispatches with his own hand. * To such incessant labour of body and mind, his constitution, naturally far from robust, began to prove unequal. By the paroxysms of a gout, become inveterate from neglect of exercise, he was at times confined for months to his apartments; still had he the imprudence to aggravate its pains. Although the posture of writing was peculiarly uneasy to him, he continued to employ his own hand in some parts of his correspondence; and was even carried from bed to write his more secret dispatches. † On his second arrival in Ireland, his gout was aggravated by the re-appearance of the aguish complaints which, at an earlier period of his life, had reduced him to a dangerous debility. While he laboured under severe pain, accompanied with an intermittent pulse, faint sweats, and depression of spirits, he began to prognosticate "that no long life awaited him here below." ‡

The effects of his bodily infirmities were aggravated by many vexations in the discharge of his

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. I. p. 203.

† Ibid. p. 371, 420, Vol. II. p. 236.

‡ Ibid. p. 143, 145.

office. Occasionally he found that neither the explicit regulations which he had stipulated, nor his perpetual labours for the benefit of the crown, could prevent the king from gratifying importunate courtiers at the price of his mortification. Appointments in the army had always been at the disposal of the lord deputy, who also acted as commander-in-chief; but Wentworth saw the command of one of his companies snatched from a friend to whom he had granted it, and given to the dependent of a rival courtier; though he had earnestly solicited both the king and the ministers, that he might be spared an affront so derogatory to his dignity, and so dangerous to his utility. * He had expressly stipulated that no grant should be made on the Irish establishment without his knowledge and concurrence; yet he found himself unexpectedly assailed by authorized demands on the public treasury; † and what galled him more deeply than all, the young Earl of Clanricarde, by his influence at court, and unknown to Wentworth, succeeded in procuring an indemnity for his losses in Galway. ‡ The king, it was whispered, beheld his receipts from the customs with an eye of jealousy; and Lord Holland, who had ready access to the

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 128, 138, 142, 144.

† Wentworth to Windebank, *Ibid.* Vol. II. p. 201.

‡ Wentworth to the King, *Ibid.* p. 83.

ear of the queen, even presumed to circulate that he was liable to accesses of lunacy. * Endeavours were used to produce a breach between him and Laud ; † and so deeply did his intimacy with that prelate offend his early patron the Lord Treasurer, that Wentworth looked on the death of the latter as a deliverance from the most dangerous of his adversaries. ‡

To such contradictions and calumnies, Wentworth betrayed an aching sensibility, and his mind was kept in perpetual distraction. He was indeed armed with every power to punish the malignant within his own jurisdiction ; and his vigorous chastisements received his majesty's fullest approbation. § But he was informed that more virulent libels were circulated against him in England, beyond his reach ; and his feelings were tormented by hints, that these attacks gained ground from his majesty's refusal to countenance him by some public mark of approbation. || Unable to endure

* Wentworth to the King, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 111, 127, 284.

† *Ibid.* p. 133, 265. ‡ *Ibid.* Vol. I. p. 411.

§ Laud to Wentworth, *Ibid.* Vol. II. p. 103. "The punishment of impertinent, unjust, clamorous persons, his majesty liketh well, that thereby you may ease both him and yourself."

|| Laud to Wentworth, *Ibid.* Vol. II. p. 42. Laud, in giving this hint, ironically adds, "but the thoughts of princes be deeper than other men's."

this any longer, Wentworth drew up a list of the calumnies circulated against him, which he transmitted to Laud, for the decision of the king.* The archbishop, though extremely irritable and impatient of censure, was yet shocked at a weakness which tended to destroy both the peace and respectability of his friend; and, therefore, in reporting the king's utter disbelief of these calumnies, advised him "never to appear openly in his defence till he was openly charged."†

Quarrel with
Loftus.

That violence of temper which had impelled him to persecute Lord Mountnorris, again engaged him in a contest extremely prejudicial to his reputation. The Lord Chancellor Loftus and his family had exerted themselves to promote the lord deputy's views, and had enjoyed more of his favour than almost any other noble house in Ireland. Amidst this interchange of benefits and acknowledgments, Sir John Gifford, who had married the Chancellor's daughter, having demanded, in behalf of his wife, some provision which his father-in-law denied, brought an action before the lord deputy in the Castle Chamber, where he obtained an award entirely in his favour. To this judgment the Chancellor refused to submit, on the ground that the action ought to have been brought in the

* Wentworth to Laud, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 105.

† Laud to Wentworth, *Ibid.* p. 126, 127.

ordinary courts of law, and that the tribunal before which it was tried was both illegal and partial. Enraged at this resistance, Wentworth procured and rigidly enforced an order to sequester him from the council, to deprive him of the seals, and to commit him to prison till his obstinacy should be subdued. * The clamour excited by this extreme severity to a minister of such dignity and reputation, was aggravated by the discovery of some letters which were said to indicate an intercourse more gallant than decorous between the lord deputy and Lady Gifford. † The influence of Wentworth at the English court was not, however, to be shaken : the appeal of the Lord Chancellor was disregarded ; and himself compelled to purchase the forgiveness of Wentworth by submission to the award, and an acknowledgment of his error. ‡

But transactions of superior importance now began to demand his exertions on a more extended

Consulted on
the Spanish
war. February
1637.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 69, 161, 164, 172, 179, 196, 227, 228.

† Leland, Vol. III. p. 40.

‡ Ibid. p. 261, 389. Although Wentworth finally triumphed in this affair, yet, in a letter to the king, (p. 161,) he discovers no small apprehension of the clamour which it excited. He excuses the whole of his conduct by alleging that he merely acted in obedience to the royal authority ; and the obstinacy of the chancellor he attributes " to the evil spirit of insubordination which began to trouble the age."

theatre. Hitherto the king had restricted even his most confidential communications with Wentworth to Irish affairs, and had never demanded his counsels with regard to the general interests of the empire. After the death of Buckingham, Charles appears to have entertained the resolution of confining his ministers to separate departments of government, while himself, the great presiding spirit, should inform and guide the whole. His jealousy of a man so lately an oppositionist, and the enemy of Buckingham, seems also to have yielded only gradually to devoted obedience and a series of important services.* The project of a war which would have affected Ireland more immediately than the rest of his dominions, appears to have been the first occasion on which Charles broke through his reserve, and demanded the opinion of Wentworth on a question relative to the empire at large.

1637. The expedient of ship-money had proved productive even beyond the sanguine expectations of the court. It had indeed been resisted by Hambden and others, and its legality solemnly argued before the judges of England; but the great majority having declared in its favour, it now seemed

* Clarendon observes, (*Hist. of Reb.* Vol. I. p. 31,) that "the king admitted very few into any degree of trust, who had ever discovered themselves to be enemies to the duke, or against whom that favourite had manifested a notable prejudice."

to rest on the surest foundation. The courtiers looked on this impost as "a spring and magazine that had no bottom, as an everlasting supply for all occasions." * The king, forgetting his former difficulties, began to meditate the enterprise of recovering the Palatinate by the aid of Protestant allies; and as France, then at war with Spain, longed to engage England in the quarrel, the rising ascendancy of the queen was employed to accelerate the warlike resolutions of her husband. Against these projects, Laud, in consternation, remonstrated; declaring that they would involve the king in all his former difficulties, and ultimately lead to the sacrifice of his servants. † As the plans of Wentworth for promoting the trade and cultivation of Ireland, depended essentially on the maintenance of an amicable intercourse with Spain, Charles, distracted by different counsels, judged it expedient to demand the lord deputy's opinion. ‡

The reply of Wentworth is interesting both for ^{His reply.} its sagacity, and for the schemes which it developes for the consolidation of an absolute monarchy. "He desired his majesty to contrast the numerous losses which a war would bring to Great Britain, and the ruin of the rising prosperity of Ireland,

* Clarendon, Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 68.

† Laud to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 66.

‡ King to Wentworth, Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 53.

with the incalculable advantages to the whole empire from carrying on the neutral trade during a war between France and Spain. He advised him to weigh the difficulty of making the members of a coalition act with cordiality, and not turn aside from views of private interest.* Would a fleet, without an army, be sufficient to overawe continental enemies, and to confirm backward allies? Even were the conquest of the Palatinate accomplished, would France generously maintain a large permanent army to guard a country unequal to its own defence? Above all, it was to be considered what resources would be requisite for so great an enterprise, and how they were to be procured. Ship-money might be more peevishly granted during a war, from the want of means to bridle the refractory; and should this impost prove sufficient for the equipment of a powerful fleet, what would be the consequence should this fleet, by any sinister accident, be lost? Would it be possible to provide another without having recourse to Parliament? And how unwise to summon that assembly at this season! The opinion of the judges in favour of the levy of ship-money, he considered the greatest service which the bench had rendered, in

* The powers who now projected a coalition for the recovery of the Palatinate were the French, the Swedes, the Danes, and the Dutch.

his time, to the crown : * still the crown stood upon one leg, unless similar levies were also authorized for the land forces. This last measure, if once well fortified, would render his majesty the most considerable monarch in Christendom, *and for ever vindicate royalty at home from the conditions and restraints of subjects.* Yet to this great enterprise the people could be won and habituated only during the season of peace, when the crown could frame and execute its measures, unembarrassed by necessity, and uncontrolled by the vicissitudes of war. Should it be necessary to do something in consequence of the faith pledged to the Elector Palatine, far better than a hostile contest would it be to employ two or three hundred thousand pounds in buying off the pretenders to his crown. Where, it might be asked, could this money be procured ? From the subjects of England, who would find their advantage in purchasing, at so easy a rate, an exemption from the far heavier expences of warfare. And by a general acquiescence in an imposition of this nature, a precedent would be gained, and the crown become possessed

* Clarendon, the strenuous friend of the crown, was of a very different opinion : " The damage and mischief," says he, " cannot be expressed, that the crown and the state sustained by the deserved reproach and infamy that attended the judges, by being made use of in this and like acts of power." Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 70.

of an authority and right which would draw after it many and great advantages, more proper to be thought on at some other season than the present." *

To these representations the king listened, and the nation was saved from external hostilities. †

Affairs of
Scotland.

But struggles far different from a distant war were now approaching; and an example of rebellion was about to be set by the country which, in the preceding generation, had given a king to the empire. On the departure of James to assume the crown of England, his native kingdom exhibited every indication of permanent tranquillity. The factions of the nobles, which, in former times, had so often bereft the monarch of his crown or his life, were weakened by the progress of civilization, and almost ceased to exist on the removal of the court. The religious contests which had agitated the nation for a century, were now tranquillized by a submission, almost universal, to the Calvinist creed and worship, as established by law; and the king might exult in a total emancipation from ecclesiastical control, while he saw the clergy humble from their poverty, and inoffensive by their estrangement from political affairs.

* Wentworth to the King, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 60, 61, 62, 63, 64.

† King to Wentworth, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 78.

But James, charmed with the adulation of the English prelates, viewed the subject in a very different light ; and having zealously adopted the maxim of *no bishop, no king*, he conceived the project of strengthening the hands of monarchy in Scotland, by the introduction of Episcopacy. His attempts, however, met with the most serious obstacles : the nobility and principal gentry were alarmed at the prospect of losing those ample possessions, which they had wrested from the Romish church at the Reformation ; and the people looked with abhorrence on rites which approached to the symbols of Catholic superstition. The result of a contest between the general sense of a nation and a feeble monarch was such as might have been foreseen. James, at his death, left his authority in Scotland weakened by dissensions which he had wantonly excited, and the people rendered, by successful opposition, more determined in their resistance to religious innovation.

During the first years of the new reign, while Charles was wholly occupied with his refractory parliaments, these abortive attempts were discontinued, and Scotland remained in a profound repose, which showed how little monarchy had to dread from either her civil or ecclesiastical establishment. It was not until Laud had acquired the chief direction of affairs, that Charles was induced to renew those attempts which had proved so unprosperous.

in the hands of his father. An imposing hierarchy, a splendid ritual, a universal conformity, were objects for which that prelate was ready to hazard the peace of a kingdom, while to Charles, the extirpation of Presbyterianism seemed an indispensable step to the establishment of an uncontrolled monarchy. The first measure taken to effect these objects, the revocation of the impropriated tithes from the nobility and gentry, diffused discontent among those most capable of resistance. A visit to Scotland, which the king undertook for the same purpose, seemed at first to promise an auspicious issue. The appearance of their young king was hailed with universal demonstrations of joy ; and while the people were filled with the warmest sensations of loyalty, Laud was permitted to mount the principal pulpit of their capital, and, in his odious garments, to declaim in behalf of his still more odious rites. But when the king, in prosecution of his favourite scheme, ventured to infringe the most sacred privileges of Parliament, to interrupt the deliberations, to threaten the members even in the house, and to exercise vengeance on the refractory, the affection of the people was suddenly converted into dislike, and Charles had to lament, that his departure from Scotland seemed to diffuse no less satisfaction than his arrival.

But this demonstration of the national sentiments was insufficient to check the ardour of

Laud: he even resolved to introduce into Scotland innovations which had been resisted in England; and to array its worship in a ceremonial still more conformable to the church of Rome. * The Scots beheld, with indignation, those institutions for which their fathers had bled, supplanted by rites connected in their minds with an abhorred superstition; they were farther disgusted to see these innovations enforced by the sole authority of the king; and the solemn statutes of the legislature superseded by royal proclamations. † The condemnation to death of Lord Balmerino, for having in his possession the draught of a very temperate petition to the king for a redress of grievances, seemed to indicate that personal security, as well as political freedom, was at an end. ‡ The cause of religion now became united with that of civil liber-

1635.

* The innovations of Laud were, in themselves, indifferent, and even puerile: capes, surplices, tippets, the name and position of the altar, the ring in marriage, the cross in baptism, were things to attract only the ignorant and superstitious: but when so gravely undertaken by the head of the English church, and so zealously enforced by the sovereign, they assumed a more serious character in the eyes of the populace. They were no longer the playthings of children, but the engines of great ministers and princes: and however indifferent they might appear, men could not believe them to be so in reality, when maintained by a monarch at the risk of involving his kingdom in rebellion and bloodshed.

† Burnet's *Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton*, p. 29, 30, 31. *Clarendon*, Vol. I. p. 106.

‡ Rushworth, Vol. II, p. 281.

- ty; and under the avowed direction of the principal nobility and gentry, the opposition to the innovations of the court acquired order and solidity.
1638. A covenant to maintain their rights was eagerly embraced throughout the nation.* The threats, the promises, the intrigues which the court employed to dissolve or disunite this confederacy, were alike unsuccessful; and when Charles appeared at the head of an army to enforce his mandates with the sword, he was met, on the borders, by a force inferior to his own in splendour, but superior in the ardour of the soldiers, and the experience of the officers.†
1639. Laud, whose instigations had precipitated this crisis, now advised his sovereign to treat with the rebels; and Charles, who had too good reason to distrust both the talents of his generals, and the adherence of his troops,‡ purchased a respite from his dangers by a hasty pacification; § after which, irritated and dejected, he dismissed his army. ||

Wentworth's conduct to the Scots.

Alarmed at the dangers which environed his power, and distracted by the contradictory counsels of his ministers, Charles began to look for support from the judgment and vigour of Wentworth. The lord deputy had not beheld, in tranquillity, the

* Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 741.

† Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 116.

‡ Ibid. p. 121. May, p. 46.

§ Rushworth, Vol. III. p.

1022. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 123.

|| Ibid. p. 124.

progress of the Scottish commotions; and though not directly consulted by the king, he had often taken occasion, in his dispatches, to state his sentiments concerning these disorders. * He had early declared the necessity of providing a sufficient force to awe or chastise the refractory Scots; and, until this could be accomplished, he had strongly urged his majesty to keep the insurgents in check, by placing strong garrisons in Berwick and Carlisle, in Dumbarton and Leith. † Dreading, above all things, the commencement of hostilities, while the king was yet unprovided with money or troops, he entreated him to defer active operations for another year: he expressed a hope that the Scots, if not driven to extremities, might yet return to a sense of duty; and reminded him, that "it was a tender point to draw blood first from subjects, even when rebellious." ‡ Nor had he confined his zeal to mere advice: by a resolute activity, he had repressed some rising disorders among the Scottish settlers in Ulster, who now amounted to sixty thousand men: § and had not only prevented them from assisting their countrymen, but compelled them to abjure the covenant. || On the first

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 233.

† Ibid. p. 191, 192, 235, 280, 324.

‡ Wentworth to the King, Ibid. p. 314, 356.

§ Ibid. p. 270. || Ibid. p. 336, 345.

requisition of the king, he had sent a detachment of troops to garrison Carlisle, and to act against the Scots: he had laboured to recruit and discipline the army of Ireland for further services: he had offered contributions from himself and his friends to defray the expences of the war: he had stimulated his connections in Yorkshire, to exert themselves in the royal cause; and had lamented that, in this season of danger, he should not be found at his majesty's side. *

Sent for by
the king,
July 23,
1639.

Charles perceived the evils which he had incurred from neglecting the advice of Wentworth; and he looked around him in vain for a minister of equal zeal. He now condescended to request the lord deputy's personal attendance, which he had formerly declined. † He wished, he said, to consult him on some military projects: "but," added he, in a tone of dejection, "I have much more, and indeed too much, to desire your counsel and attendance for some time, which I think not fit to express by letter, more than this—the Scottish covenant spreads too far." He begged, however, that Wentworth would not make known the motive of his request, but find some other pretext for visiting England. ‡

* Wentworth to the King, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 233, 278, 279, 289, 308.

† *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 281.

‡ King to Wentworth, *Ibid.* p. 372.

The lord deputy lost no time in obeying this summons. Committing the government of Ireland in his absence to his friend Wandesford, he hastened to the English court, under pretence of opposing the appeal of the Lord Chancellor Loftus. The high opinion entertained of his abilities made his arrival in London the general theme of conversation and conjecture. Some, remembering his early ardour in the cause of the people, fondly imagined that he had hitherto been subservient to the court, only to ingratiate himself thoroughly with the king; and that he would now employ his ascendancy to wean his majesty from arbitrary counsels. But others, considering his ambition, and the maxims of his government in Ireland, gave a very different explanation of the motives of his arrival.*

Arrival in
England.
November
1639.

The immediate object of discussion submitted to Wentworth, and his principal colleagues, Laud and Hamilton, † was the nature of the measures to be pursued towards the Scots. ‡ So vague and in-

Advises war
with the
Scots.

* May, p. 53, 54.

† These three ministers, and occasionally some others, were, by the opponents of the court, reproachfully termed the *junto* and the *cabinet-council*. Such was the origin of a term now attended with peculiar distinction. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 149.

‡ It was only a few months before this period that Charles had, for the first time, consulted his English ministers concerning the affairs of Scotland. Both he and his father had adhered to their rule of advising with Scotsmen alone concerning the affairs of Scot-

distinct had been the provisions of the late pacification, that the contracting parties could not agree either with respect to its terms or its spirit ; and the representation given by the one was flatly denied by the other. * The Scots seemed resolved to maintain their interpretation of the treaty at the head of an armed force ; and as it was now discovered that they had meditated an application to the French court for succours, † Wentworth declared that there was no other alternative for the king, than to forego his sovereignty, or reduce his rebellious subjects by force of arms.

And a parliament.

The proposition for war was readily acceded to ; but how to procure supplies was a more difficult question. So much had the dissipation of the court exhausted both the ordinary and extraordinary revenues, ‡ that the king had been enabled to march against the Scots, only by the uncertain aid of voluntary contributions, and by commanding all the crown vassals to join his standard under pain of forfeiting their tenures. § The arbitrary expedients of selling monopolies, and levying partial

land : and to this policy, whatever might be its motive, Wentworth ascribes the commotions which now agitated that part of the island. *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 190.

* *Clarendon*, Vol. I. p. 123.

† *King's Declaration*. *Clarendon*, p. 129.

‡ *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 267.

§ *Clarendon*, Vol. I. p. 116.

exactions, had already been carried to the utmost ; and ship-money began to be paid with more reluctance as the necessities of the crown increased. * In the present state of affairs, it seemed dangerous to provoke the nation by more unauthorized imposts ; and, as every other resource seemed hopeless, Wentworth, Laud, and Hamilton, united in proposing that a parliament should be summoned. † An expedient, long evaded by every art, and adopted only from extreme necessity, could not be regarded with much confidence ; and the council, therefore, thought proper to point to an alternative by a vote “ to assist the king in extraordinary ways, if the parliament should prove peevish, and refuse supplies.” ‡ Wentworth displayed his superior zeal by subscribing twenty thousand pounds as his share of a voluntary contribution ; § and to set an example of loyalty to the English, he requested that a parliament, for the same objects, should previously be held in Ireland.

It was no longer a season for Charles to be pe-
 nurious of his honours, or afraid to share in the
 unpopularity of Wentworth. It was not the re-
 ward of a meritorious servant that was now in ques-
 tion, but the interest of the sovereign himself.

Created
 Earl of
 Strafford,
 and Lord
 Lieutenant.
 January
 1640.

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 978. Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 308. † Laud's Diary. ‡ Ibid.

§ Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1051. Nelson, Vol. I. p. 280.

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|| Ibid. p. 124.

progress of the Scottish commotions; and though not directly consulted by the king, he had often taken occasion, in his dispatches, to state his sentiments concerning these disorders. * He had early declared the necessity of providing a sufficient force to awe or chastise the refractory Scots; and, until this could be accomplished, he had strongly urged his majesty to keep the insurgents in check, by placing strong garrisons in Berwick and Carlisle, in Dumbarton and Leith. † Dreading, above all things, the commencement of hostilities, while the king was yet unprovided with money or troops, he entreated him to defer active operations for another year: he expressed a hope that the Scots, if not driven to extremities, might yet return to a sense of duty; and reminded him, that "it was a tender point to draw blood first from subjects, even when rebellious." ‡ Nor had he confined his zeal to mere advice: by a resolute activity, he had repressed some rising disorders among the Scottish settlers in Ulster, who now amounted to sixty thousand men: § and had not only prevented them from assisting their countrymen, but compelled them to abjure the covenant. || On the first

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 233.

† Ibid. p. 191, 192, 235, 280, 324.

‡ Wentworth to the King, Ibid. p. 314, 356.

§ Ibid. p. 270. || Ibid. p. 336, 345.

requisition of the king, he had sent a detachment of troops to garrison Carlisle, and to act against the Scots: he had laboured to recruit and discipline the army of Ireland for further services: he had offered contributions from himself and his friends to defray the expences of the war: he had stimulated his connections in Yorkshire, to exert themselves in the royal cause; and had lamented that, in this season of danger, he should not be found at his majesty's side. *

Sent for by
the king,
July 23,
1639.

Charles perceived the evils which he had incurred from neglecting the advice of Wentworth; and he looked around him in vain for a minister of equal zeal. He now condescended to request the lord deputy's personal attendance, which he had formerly declined. † He wished, he said, to consult him on some military projects: "but," added he, in a tone of dejection, "I have much more, and indeed too much, to desire your counsel and attendance for some time, which I think not fit to express by letter, more than this—the Scottish covenant spreads too far." He begged, however, that Wentworth would not make known the motive of his request, but find some other pretext for visiting England. ‡

* Wentworth to the King, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 233, 278, 279, 289, 308.

† *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 281.

‡ King to Wentworth, *Ibid.* p. 372.

The lord deputy lost no time in obeying this summons. Committing the government of Ireland in his absence to his friend Wandesford, he hastened to the English court, under pretence of opposing the appeal of the Lord Chancellor Loftus. The high opinion entertained of his abilities made his arrival in London the general theme of conversation and conjecture. Some, remembering his early ardour in the cause of the people, fondly imagined that he had hitherto been subservient to the court, only to ingratiate himself thoroughly with the king; and that he would now employ his ascendancy to wean his majesty from arbitrary counsels. But others, considering his ambition, and the maxims of his government in Ireland, gave a very different explanation of the motives of his arrival.*

Arrival in
England.
November
1639.

The immediate object of discussion submitted to Wentworth, and his principal colleagues, Laud and Hamilton, † was the nature of the measures to be pursued towards the Scots. ‡ So vague and in-

Advises war
with the
Scots.

* May, p. 53, 54.

† These three ministers, and occasionally some others, were, by the opponents of the court, reproachfully termed the *junto* and the *cabinet-council*. Such was the origin of a term now attended with peculiar distinction. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 149.

‡ It was only a few months before this period that Charles had, for the first time, consulted his English ministers concerning the affairs of Scotland. Both he and his father had adhered to their rule of advising with Scotsmen alone concerning the affairs of Scot-

distinct had been the provisions of the late pacification, that the contracting parties could not agree either with respect to its terms or its spirit; and the representation given by the one was flatly denied by the other.* The Scots seemed resolved to maintain their interpretation of the treaty at the head of an armed force; and as it was now discovered that they had meditated an application to the French court for succour,† Wentworth declared that there was no other alternative for the king, than to forego his sovereignty, or reduce his rebellious subjects by force of arms.

And a parliament.

The proposition for war was readily acceded to; but how to procure supplies was a more difficult question. So much had the dissipation of the court exhausted both the ordinary and extraordinary revenues,‡ that the king had been enabled to march against the Scots, only by the uncertain aid of voluntary contributions, and by commanding all the crown vassals to join his standard under pain of forfeiting their tenures.§ The arbitrary expedients of selling monopolies, and levying partial

land: and to this policy, whatever might be its motive, Wentworth ascribes the commotions which now agitated that part of the island. *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 190.

* *Clarendon*, Vol. I. p. 123.

† *King's Declaration*. *Clarendon*, p. 129.

‡ *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 267.

§ *Clarendon*, Vol. I. p. 116.

exactions, had already been carried to the utmost ; and ship-money began to be paid with more reluctance as the necessities of the crown increased. * In the present state of affairs, it seemed dangerous to provoke the nation by more unauthorized imposts ; and, as every other resource seemed hopeless, Wentworth, Laud, and Hamilton, united in proposing that a parliament should be summoned. † An expedient, long evaded by every art, and adopted only from extreme necessity, could not be regarded with much confidence ; and the council, therefore, thought proper to point to an alternative by a vote “ to assist the king in extraordinary ways, if the parliament should prove peevish, and refuse supplies.” ‡ Wentworth displayed his superior zeal by subscribing twenty thousand pounds as his share of a voluntary contribution ; § and to set an example of loyalty to the English, he requested that a parliament, for the same objects, should previously be held in Ireland.

It was no longer a season for Charles to be pe-
 nurious of his honours, or afraid to share in the
 unpopularity of Wentworth. It was not the re-
 ward of a meritorious servant that was now in ques-
 tion, but the interest of the sovereign himself.

Created
 Earl of
 Strafford,
 and Lord
 Lieutenant.
 January
 1640.

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 978. Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 308.

† Laud's Diary.

‡ Ibid.

§ Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1051. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 280.

Wentworth was created Earl of Strafford, adorned with the Garter, and invested with the title of Lord Lieutenant, which, since the time of Essex, had been withheld from the governors of Ireland. * These honours, so often requested, and so tardily bestowed, had yet their charms in the eyes of the receiver; and both in a studied address to the king,† and in some private letters to his wife, ‡ he betrayed his exultation on this accession to his splendour.

March 16,
1640.

Success
with Irish
Parliament.

As the appointed day for the meeting of the Irish parliament approached, the Lord Lieutenant quitted London to regulate its proceedings; and when overtaken at Beaumaris, by a severe fit of the gout, he hastened on board, though the winds continued contrary, lest the increasing distempers should become too painful to permit his removal. §

The zeal of the Irish Parliament exceeded his most sanguine expectations. Their governor now appeared to enjoy not only the royal approbation, but the direction of his majesty's councils; and through his hands all favours were to be expected. The war against the Scots offered also a particular occasion for making interest at the English court;

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1060. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 280.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 390.

‡ Biographia Britannica from the MSS. in Museo Thoresbiano.

§ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 394.

and every one strove to distinguish himself by a zealous attachment to the Lord Lieutenant, and an unbounded devotion to the king. Having unanimously voted four subsidies, the sum required by the court, the parliament declared that this was a very insignificant expression of their zeal; that his majesty should have the "fee-simple of their estates for his great occasions." * They proceeded to draw up a formal declaration, in which they "humbly offered their persons and estates, even to their utmost ability," for his majesty's future supply, till the reduction of the present disorders. † In the preamble to the bill of subsidies, they declared that their present warm loyalty arose from a deep sense of the inestimable benefits conferred on their country by the Lord Lieutenant; they recounted his meritorious services to the king, and assured his majesty that all these had been effected "without the least hurt or grievance to any well disposed subject." ‡

To Strafford, so often reviled, so eager to bind the king by obligations, these proceedings were necessarily gratifying; § and, with a pardonable

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 396, 397. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 281, 282.

† Ibid. p. 283.

‡ Ibid. Vol. II. p. 396, 397. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1051. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 280—284.

§ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 403.

triumph, he requested the English court to make public the loyal declaration of the Irish parliament as an example to the rest of the empire. * Having, with incredible diligence, levied a body of eight thousand men, as a reinforcement to the royal army, he quitted Ireland, after a stay of a fortnight, to attend the opening of the English parliament. †

Dangerous
illness.

April 4.

But that activity, which had so much contributed to the success of his schemes, was now suspended by unseasonable infirmities. From excessive fatigue, a violent flux was added to his gout, which had now seized him in both feet; and to such a degree were these distempers aggravated by a storm which he encountered on his passage, that, on his arrival at Chester, he could with difficulty endure to be carried ashore. ‡ Here he lay for some days extended on a bed, unable to bear the slightest motion, and equally tormented by pain and anxiety. In this paroxysm of his distempers, there occurred a circumstance strongly characteristic of his unconquerable energy. The king having demanded, from the county of York, two hundred men for the garrison of Berwick, the lieutenants, who inclined to the popular party, ventured to refuse the

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 399.

† Ibid. p. 399, 403. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 280.

‡ Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 403.

requisition. Strafford, hearing of this refusal, and learning that the privy-council had in contemplation to demand satisfaction for this contumacy, wrote to Secretary Windebanke, expressing his astonishment "that the council should think of any other satisfaction, than sending for them up, and laying them by the heels." *

As soon as he could endure the motion, he caused himself to be placed in a litter, and conveyed by slow journies to London. Here he found the parliament already met, and conducting their discussions with unexpected temper and moderation. † They were aware that extreme necessity alone had induced the king to assemble them ; they had many grievances to redress ; and could complain that the Petition of Right had been violated in almost every instance. But elected from among the most wealthy and enlightened men in the nation, and unwilling to see their country ravaged by a civil

In the
English
Parliament.
April 13,
1640.

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 409.

† Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 131, informs us that the court persisted in the same unpopular course even after issuing the writs for the meeting of parliament. " That it might not appear that the court was at all apprehensive of what the parliament would or could do ; and that it was convened by his majesty's grace and inclination, not by any motive of necessity ; it proceeded in all respects in the same unpopular way it had done. Ship-money was levied with the same severity ; and the same rigour used in ecclesiastical courts, without the least compliance with the humour of any man."

war, the Commons were disposed to relieve the necessities of the crown, and seemed inclined to wean the king from his arbitrary counsels, by showing how much more amply and easily he could obtain supplies by the legal course of parliaments. They spoke, indeed, of grievances, but in terms so moderate and respectful as to avoid all offence; and when a member, less guarded than the rest, ventured to call ship-money *an abomination*, he narrowly escaped a severe reprehension. *

But these favourable presages were quickly blasted by the impatience of the court. The king, in his opening speech, delivered by the mouth of the lord keeper, had told them that he desired, not their advice, but their supplies; and that he expected these to be dispatched, before their grievances were brought in question.† While the Commons, a few days afterwards, were engaged in debating whether they should comply with this requisition of the king, or, according to the established form, first represent their grievances, and afterwards consider of supplies, Charles, unexpectedly, hastened to the House of Lords, desired them to enter on the question of supply, and, both by their example and admonition, to bring the Commons to the same course.‡ This precipitate

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 134.

† Ibid. p. 132.

‡ Nalson, Vol. I. p. 330, 331. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1144.
Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 134.

interference, and the ready obedience of the Lords, threw the Commons into violent agitation. Since their first admission into parliament, it had been their acknowledged right to commence all discussions relative to pecuniary supplies; and the present infraction of this fundamental privilege seemed an attempt to awe them by the authority of the peers. Several days elapsed in the debates and conferences to which this incident gave rise; and the king, by his unadvised precipitation, only delayed the discussions which he desired to accelerate, and irritated the Commons, when it was most his interest to conciliate them. *

Charles now attempted another expedient to procure immediate supplies. He informed the Commons, that, although the legality of ship-money had been ascertained by the decision of the judges of England; yet, as it was not willingly submitted to by the people, he would, for a grant of twelve subsidies, consent to renounce his pretensions to it for ever. † To some members, it seemed unwise to acknowledge the justice of this arbitrary exaction, by purchasing an exemption from it; but the majority were willing to wave the question of right, and only desired a mitigation of the

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 134, 135. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1146—1153. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 335—340.

† Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 135. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1154 Nalson, Vol. I. p. 341.

price demanded by the king, which, even to the most moderate, appeared exorbitant. They were, however, informed by Sir Henry Vane, now Treasurer of the Household, and Secretary of State, that, unless they voted the supply in the very proportion and manner specified in the royal message, it would not be accepted by his majesty. * This declaration, which was enforced by Herbert, the Solicitor General, appeared peremptory even to the king's best friends; and after a long discussion, the question was adjourned till the following day. But Vane, having been commissioned to report the proceedings to his majesty, represented the warmth and resistance of the house in such glowing colours, as filled the king with the most fearful presages. † Dreading some violent measure against his arbitrary exactions, he next morning repaired to the House of Lords, and summoning the Commons into his presence, confounded the parliament by an immediate dissolution. ‡

Consternation and discontent were spread throughout the kingdom, by this unexpected violence to a parliament, whose assembling the people had fondly regarded as the renovation of their constitutional rights. Charles himself immediately repented of his rashness, accused Vane of having deceived him,

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 138. † Ibid. p. 139.

‡ Ibid. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1155. Nelson, Vol. I. p. 342.

denied that ever he had authorized the peremptory demands delivered to the house, and expressed a wish to recall the dissolution. * But finding it too late to repair his error, he published a high-toned declaration defending his conduct ; and, according to his usual practice, imprisoned some of the most conspicuous members. † He now employed every expedient to raise supplies by the royal authority. He issued orders to impress recruits for the army ; commanded the counties to pay specified sums for clothing and marching the troops ; imposed a loan of three hundred thousand pounds on the city of London, and imprisoned the refractory citizens ; ordered the pepper under the Exchange to be bought up on his account, and sold at an undervalue ; seized the bullion in the mint ; and was at one time advised to coin three hundred thousand pounds of base money for the payment of the troops. ‡

By means of these expedients, and a considerable loan from his principal courtiers, § Charles was enabled to march against the Scots, who, on their

Appointed
to command
the troops.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 139, 140.

† Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1160—1167. Nelson, Vol. I. p. 344—351.

‡ Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1170—1217. May, p. 62, 63. Nelson, Vol. I. p. 486—491. This last project was abandoned ; and, on the earnest representations of the merchants, only a third of the bullion in the mint was retained as a loan.

§ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 140.

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part, were preparing to carry the war into England. The Earl of Northumberland had been appointed commander-in-chief: but, on account of his illness, the command devolved on Strafford, the lieutenant-general, whose distempers hardly permitted him to sit on horseback. * Looking on the Scots as a horde of undisciplined rebels, he had beheld the late treaty with indignation; and declared his opinion, that a moderate English army could drive them, with disgrace, to their homes. But before he could reach his troops, he was met by the mortifying intelligence that a part of them had been attacked by the Scots at Newburn on Tyne; and, although aided by the advantages of ground, had, almost without coming to blows, betaken themselves to an ignominious flight. On this the main body abandoning Newcastle, where their ammunition and provisions were deposited, halted not till they reached the neighbourhood of Durham, where they were met by their incensed Lieutenant-General. † Irritable from the painful distempers which hung on his constitution, and exasperated beyond all bounds by the misconduct of his army, Strafford undertook the command with looks of indignation, and the language of reproach. Stung by his indiscriminate censures, and inflamed by the arts of his secret adversaries, the troops

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 141, 144. † Nelson, Vol. I. p. 426.

soon displayed more hatred against their general than against the enemy: and the first military exploit of Strafford was to abandon the northern counties to the mercy of the foe, and retreat to York with a disgraced and mutinous army. *

The tide of Strafford's fortune was now rapidly ebbing. His avowed sentiments of the Scots had rendered them his implacable enemies: his support of ship-money, and other arbitrary measures, had procured him almost equal hatred among the people of England: and his influence and conduct rendered a powerful party of the courtiers eager to promote his ruin. The Marquis of Hamilton, who now enjoyed the principal confidence of the king, had long beheld him with aversion: † and he was equally hated by Lord Holland and Sir Harry Vane, the confidential advisers of the queen. He had offended Holland by some contemptuous expressions: ‡ he had provoked Vane by obstructing his promotion; and, when created Earl of Strafford, he wantonly exasperated this adversary, by procuring himself to be also created Baron of Raby, a manor belonging to Vane, and regarded by him as his own future title. § The Earls of Essex and Arundel had been displaced by his in-

Adverse affairs.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 144, 145.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 265.

‡ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 150.

§ Ibid. Nalson, Vol. I. p.

411, introduction, p. 73, Vol. II. p. 2.

fluence, from the commands which they held in the former expedition against Scotland, and were, on other accounts, his declared foes : Arundel, from some private quarrels ; and Essex, from friendship to the Earl of Clanricarde. * But his most dangerous enemy at court was the queen, whose influence over her husband was daily increasing. Her inveterate antipathy to the Duke of Buckingham had been transferred to his creature, Laud ; and, by a natural association, to the principal friend and supporter of Laud. Strafford had made some attempts to conciliate her favour ; † but he had offended her by dissuading an active co-operation with France, and still more by his opposition to the promotion of Vane, whom she supported with all her influence. ‡

The superior ascendancy of this hostile interest was soon felt by Strafford, who now saw the most important and hazardous measures undertaken without his concurrence, or even his knowledge. As the lords had proved, in the last parliament, more submissive than the commons, the king was advised to revive an old feudal institution, and summon a grand council of peers, for the relief of

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 150, 151.

† Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 226.

‡ Nalson, ubi supra. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 125, 126.

his necessities. * Apprehensive, however, that the peers would urge him to call a parliament, he resolved at least to have the merit of a voluntary sacrifice; and, in his opening speech to the grand council, announced that he had already determined to adopt this measure. † If Strafford was confounded at these precipitate transactions, he experienced a deeper mortification from the discovery that his inveterate enemy, Lord Savile, was employed in carrying on private overtures between the court and the Scots. ‡ While eagerly engaged in strengthening and animating his army for a new encounter, he found a treaty actually commenced with the rebellious subjects; and the negotiations entrusted to sixteen peers, among whom he could discover his most active enemies, but not one friend. § And while the Scots were lavish in their professions of attachment to the king and the English nation, they refused to hold their conferences at York, because it was within the jurisdiction of their mortal enemy, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. ||

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 147. † Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1275.

‡ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 155.

§ Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1276. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 155.

|| The words of the Scots on this occasion are expressive of great antipathy: "We cannot conceal what danger may be apprehended in our going to York, and surrendering ourselves into the hands of an army commanded by the lieutenant of Ireland, against whom,

His mistake
on views.

Strafford now found himself placed, by the effects of undue zeal, amidst a host of enemies; and received no doubtful intimations that he had mistaken the state of the national spirit. He had, indeed, long known that the popular feelings were exasperated by arbitrary exactions,* by the infamy of the judges in perverting the laws to gratify the court,† by the cruel punishments employed to repress freedom of speech and writing,‡ by

as a chief incendiary, (according to our demands, which are the subject of the treaty itself,) we intend to insist, as is expressed in our remonstrance and declaration; who hath, in the parliament of Ireland, proceeded against us as traitors and rebels, (the best titles his lordship, in his common talk, honours us with,) whose commission is to subvert and destroy us, and who, by all means, and on all occasions, desireth the breaking up of the treaty of peace." Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1293. Nalson, Vol. I. p. 463.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 67, 68.

† Ibid. p. 70.

‡ Never did the press groan under such grievous oppression. Neither the rank of an offender, nor the dubious nature of an offence, could guard men from the most harsh and disgraceful punishments. Mr Prynne, a barrister, who had written a book against masquerades and plays, was, in the court of the Star Chamber, found guilty of a libel against the government, because the king and queen happened to be passionately fond of these diversions. For this alleged crime he was sentenced to a fine of five thousand pounds, to be imprisoned for life, to stand in the pillory in Westminster and Chesham, and to lose both his ears, one in each of these places. Having, in his prison, written some exposition of the injustice of the proceedings against him, he was, for this new offence, sentenced by the same court to pay another fine of five thousand pounds, to stand again in the pillory, and to lose the remainder of his ears! The hangman, from the closeness of the stumps to the head, was obliged

the usurped power of the Star Chamber, and other arbitrary courts, * and by the consequent annihila-

rather to saw than cut them off. Bastwick a physician, and Burton a divine, were sentenced to the same punishments for similar offences. See their trials and sentences in Rushworth, Vol. II. p. 220—241, 362. Dr Leighton, a divine of learning and virtue, for writing a book against prelacy with too much warmth, was sentenced to pay ten thousand pounds to the king, to be imprisoned during his majesty's pleasure, and to suffer a variety of infamous and cruel punishments, which, as Archbishop Laud himself has recorded in his Diary, were inflicted in the following manner: "He was severely whipt before he was set in the pillory: being set in the pillory, he had one of his ears cut off; one side of his nose slit; branded on one cheek with a red-hot iron, with the letters S. S. signifying a *stirrer up of sedition*, and afterwards carried back again to the Fleet prison, to be kept in close custody; and on that day sevennight, his sores upon his back, ear, nose, and face being not cured, he was whipt again at the pillory in Cheapside, and there had the remainder of his sentence executed upon him, by cutting off the other ear, slitting the other side of the nose, and branding the other cheek." After enduring these cruelties, he was thrown into a damp unwholesome dungeon, from which he was, eleven years after, rescued by the Long Parliament, having lost his eye-sight, his hearing, and nearly the whole use of his limbs.

* Nothing can more expose the excess of this abuse than the confession of the loyalist historian Clarendon: "For the better support of these extraordinary ways, and to protect the agents and instruments, who must be employed in them, and to discountenance and suppress all bold inquirers and opposers, the Council-Table and Star Chamber enlarge their jurisdiction to a vast extent. 'Holding,' as Thucydides said of the Athenians, 'for honourable that which pleased, and for just that which profited;'¹ and being the same persons in several rooms, grew both courts of law to determine right, and courts of revenue to bring money into the treasury; the Council-Table, by proclamations, enjoining to the

tion of security for persons and property : he knew farther, that the consciences of many were shocked by the innovations of Laud, and that the ambition of the nobility was deeply wounded by the attempt to transfer public offices into the hands of the clergy.* Still he had attributed the ebulli-

people what was not enjoined by the law, and prohibiting that which was not prohibited ; and the Star Chamber censuring the breach, and disobedience to those proclamations, by very great fines and imprisonment. So that any disrespect to any acts of state, or to the persons of statesmen, was, in no time more penal ; and those foundations of right, by which men valued their security, to the apprehension of wise men, never more in danger to be destroyed." *Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 68, 69.*

* Laud, by his efforts to exalt the clergy, had greatly disgusted the nobility. He had induced the king to bestow the office of Lord High Treasurer on Juxon, a very worthy man, but entirely unknown, who had been, within two years, raised from obscurity ; and, by the interest of Laud, first appointed clerk of the king's closet, and afterwards Bishop of London. There were few things which excited more violent enmity to the church, than conferring the office of Treasurer on Juxon ; but to Laud, it was a source of unspeakable satisfaction, as he records in his Diary : " March 6th, Sunday, William Juxon, Lord Bishop of London, made Lord High Treasurer of England : no churchman had it since Henry the Seventh's time. I pray God bless him to carry it so, that the church may have honour, and the king and the state service and contentment by it. And now, if the church will not hold up themselves, under God I can do no more." In Scotland, at the introduction of Episcopacy, this invidious eagerness for the promotion of churchmen was carried still further : they held nearly all the more important offices of state, along with seats in the privy-council.

tions of popular discontent * to the want of that vigour, before which he had, in Ireland, found all obstacles yield. He had returned the exhortations of Laud, to persist in *thorough* measures : † he had treated the popular leaders with contempt ; ‡ and

* These discontents broke out, in the most alarming manner, while the court was attempting to levy an army against the Scots. The impressed men employed the most shocking means to avoid the service ; one cut off his toe, and another even hanged himself. Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. p. 361. In several counties, the soldiers mutinied and murdered their officers. Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 1191—1195. Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. II. p. 301.

† He tells Laud, (Letters, Vol. II. p. 250,) that, in his opinion, the Scottish affairs were lost by too great a desire to do things quietly ; that opposition is, at first, easily quashed by vigour ; but, adds he, " so long as I do serve, I will *thorough*, by the grace of God, follow after what shall please him to send." He seems also to have formed a wrong idea of the king's firmness, unless, perhaps, he thought it necessary to express his sentiments cautiously to a fellow-courtier : " Our master is an excellent horseman, and knows perfectly how to bring to obedience a hard mouth with a sharp bit, where a sweeter will not do it." Wentworth to Newcastle, Letters, Vol. II. p. 256. In another letter to Laud, he speaks of the spirit of the age as " a grievous and overspreading leprosy. Less," he adds, " than *thorough* will not overcome it. There is a cancerous malignity in it, which must be cut forth, which long since hath rejected all other means." Letters, Vol. II. p. 136.

‡ " I am confident," he writes to Laud, " that the king, being pleased to set himself in the business, is able, by his wisdom and ministers, to carry any just and honourable action through all imaginary opposition, for real there can be none : that, to start aside for such panic fears, fantastic apparitions as a *Prynne* or an *Elliot* shall set up, were the meanest folly in the world ; that the debts of

had forgot that if some of them were, like himself, ready to accept the favours of the court, the impoverished court possessed not the means to buy off so numerous an opposition.

Difficulties. But circumstances were now such as to render his personal vigour of no avail. He no longer acted as the independent director of a separate government ; and he found it in vain to advise resolute measures where his master was unstable, and where adverse counsels predominated. In the presence of such colleagues as Holland and Vane, he was obliged to repress his sentiments within his bosom, and give an apparent consent where opposition was fruitless.* He determined, however,

the crown taken off, you may govern as you please ; and most resolute I am that work may be done, without borrowing any help forth of the king's lodgings ; and it is as downright a *peccatum ex te Israel* as ever was, if all this be not effected with speed and ease." Letters, Vol. I. p. 173. Hambden, he thinks, might have been easily reformed by some wholesome chastisement : " Mr Hambden is a great brother ; and the very genius of that nation of people leads them always to oppose, both civilly and ecclesiastically, all that ever authority ordains for them. But, in good faith, were they rightly served, they should be whipt home into their right wits ; and much beholden they should be to any that would thoroughly take pains with them in that kind." Wentworth to Laud, Letters, Vol. II. p. 138. Again ; " In truth I still wish Mr Hambden, and others to his likeness, were well whipt into their right senses : and if that the rod be so used that it smarts not, I am the more sorry," Wentworth to Laud, Letters, p. 158.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 159,

to give one practical proof of the possibility of re-institating the royal authority by vigorous exertion. As no cessation of arms had been agreed on with the Scots, during the negotiation he sent a party of horse, under a skilful officer, to attack them in their quarters. The enterprise was successful, the detachment defeated a large body of the enemy, and took all the officers prisoners. But this success, while it raised the spirits of the army, still more inflamed the Scots against Strafford: and, when it became known that the officer who conducted the party was a Roman Catholic, the English joined in the clamour against the foe of religion. The feeble king, overcome by their united remonstrances, commanded his general to forbear, for the future, from all offensive operations. *

To this galling mandate Strafford bowed in silence. Though haughty to inferiors, and daring towards an enemy, he gave himself up to the royal will with the most humble resignation. Impressed with the magnificence of titles and power, he looked with a reverential awe to those who possessed them in a superior degree; and could scarcely bring himself to question their orders, or approach them with familiarity. † Towards the king he had

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 159. Father Orleans, p. 84.

† This trait of his character is remarkably exemplified in his conduct to Laud. When that prelate, with whom he had, for

never ventured to assume that commanding and violent attitude which was employed, with unbounded success, by the Duke of Buckingham, and afterwards by the queen ; and unfortunately, in the deliberations of Charles, zeal and compliance were unable to outweigh persevering importunity, or peremptory demand. Strafford had now to look on, in silent despair, while the humbled king formed a preliminary truce with the Scots, and even agreed to pay their army till the conclusion of a final treaty. *

But more severe trials soon awaited his fortitude. On the 3d of November 1640 was assembled that parliament which was to witness, during its continuance, the most violent convulsions to which the constitution and people of this island were ever exposed. It was composed, in a great measure, of the same persons as the former parliament ; but their dispositions had become greatly changed. Their resentment had been roused by the abrupt dissolution, by the imprisonment of members, by

some years, lived on the most intimate footing, was raised from the see of London to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, Wentworth desisted from his usual familiarity, and at length resumed it only in consequence of the good-natured raillery of Laud, who assured him that the palace of Lambeth was occupied by his old friend, the Bishop of London. Laud to Wentworth, *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. I. p. 111.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 160.

the arbitrary methods employed to raise money ; and the enterprises against the Scots, so unsuccessfully prosecuted, so feebly relinquished, had extinguished their respect for the king. Concluding, from repeated experience, that necessity alone could wrest concessions from their sovereign, they resolved, while the exchequer was empty, and a hostile army stationed in the kingdom, to proceed with a bold and determined hand in reforming abuses, and placing effectual barriers to future encroachments.

In these designs, the only obstacles which they feared were the vigour and talents of Strafford. While the popular leaders detested him as a traitor to their cause, and the Scots as the implacable enemy of their nation, all equally dreaded those abilities which had laid Ireland prostrate at his feet, and which might yet inspire vigour into the counsels of Charles. So long as he continued at the head of an army, there was no security that he might not, by some sudden movement, confound and crush their projects ; and nothing was, therefore, to be achieved till after accomplishing his destruction.

The apprehensions of the king soon brought their dreaded adversary into their power. When he compared the management of an Irish parliament by Strafford with his own abortive attempts in England, Charles, without duly weighing the

Summoned
to Parlia-
ment.
November
1640.

difference of circumstances, was led to expect from this minister's assistance an issue no longer possible. Strafford hesitated to incur certain dangers in so hopeless a struggle. To the royal summons for his attendance in parliament, he replied by an earnest request that he might be permitted to retire to his government in Ireland, or to some other place where he might promote the service of his majesty, and not deliver himself into the hands of his enraged enemies. But to these representations Charles refused to listen; and, with too much confidence in a firmness which had so often failed him, he encouraged his minister by a solemn promise, that "not a hair of his head should be touched by the parliament." *

Impeached
of high
treason.

Strafford at length prepared to obey these repeated mandates; and having discovered a traitorous correspondence, in which his enemy Savile, and some other lords, had invited the Scots to invade England, he resolved to anticipate and confound his adversaries by an accusation of these popular leaders. † But no sooner were the Commons informed that he had taken his seat among the peers, than they ordered their doors to be shut; and, after they had continued several hours in deliberation, Pym, attended by a number of members,

* Whitlocke's Memorials, p. 37. † Strafford's Trial, p. 2.

appeared at the bar of the House of Lords, and, in the name of the Commons of England, impeached the Earl of Strafford of high treason. This charge was accompanied by a desire that he should be sequestered from parliament, and forthwith committed to prison ; a request which, after a short deliberation, was granted. *

November
13, 1640.

A few days after his impeachment, a charge of nine articles was presented by the Commons : but a committee of both houses being appointed to prepare the impeachment, went into investigations of great length, and, after three months' labour, extended the charges to twenty-eight articles. The grand point to be established against Strafford was *an attempt to subvert the fundamental laws of the country* : and the course in law was to show that such an attempt, as it would prove destructive to the state, was a traitorous design against its sovereign. The proofs of the accusation were deduced from a series of his actions infringing the laws, from words intimating arbitrary designs, and from certain counsels which directly tended to the ruin of the constitution. †

Articles of
impeach-
ment.

As president of the council of York, Strafford was charged with having procured powers subversive of all law, with having committed insufferable

* Strafford's Trial, p. 4. May, p. 88.

† Strafford's Trial. Nelson, Vol. II. Whitlocke.

acts of oppression under colour of his instructions ; and with having distinctly announced tyrannical intentions, by declaring that the people should find “ the king’s little finger heavier than the loins of the law.”

As governor of Ireland, he was accused of having publicly asserted, “ That the Irish were a conquered nation, and that the king might do with them as he pleased.” He was charged with acts of oppression towards the Earl of Cork, Lord Mountnorris, the Lord Chancellor Loftus, Lord Dillon, the Earl of Kildare, and other persons. He had, it was alleged, issued a general warrant for the seizure of all persons who refused to submit to any legal decree against them, and for their detention till they either submitted, or gave bail to appear before the council table : he had sent soldiers to free quarters on those who would not obey his arbitrary decrees : he had prevented the redress of his injustice, by procuring instructions to prohibit all persons of distinction from quitting Ireland without his express licence : he had appropriated to himself a large share of the customs, the monopoly of tobacco, and the sale of licences for the exportation of certain commodities : he had committed grievous acts of oppression in guarding his monopoly of tobacco : he had, for his own interest, caused the rates on merchandise to be raised, and the merchants to be harassed with

new and unlawful oaths : he had obstructed the industry of the country, by introducing new and unknown processes into the manufacture of flax : he had encouraged his army, the instrument of his oppression, by assuring them that his majesty would regard them as a pattern for all his three kingdoms : he had enforced an illegal oath on the Scottish subjects in Ireland : he had given undue encouragement to papists, and had actually composed the whole of his new-levied troops of adherents to that religion.

As chief minister of England, it was laid to his charge that he had instigated the king to make war on the Scots, and had himself, as governor of Ireland, commenced hostilities : that, on the question of supplies, he had declared, " That his majesty should first try the parliament here, and if that did not supply him according to his occasions, he might then use his prerogative to levy what he needed ; and that he should be acquitted both of God and man, if he took some other courses to supply himself, though it were against the will of his subjects : " that, after the dissolution of that parliament, he had said to his majesty, " That, having tried the affections of his people, he was loose and absolved from all rules of government, and was to do every thing that power would admit ; that his majesty had tried all ways, and was refused, and should be acquitted both to God and

man ; that he had an army in Ireland, which he might employ to reduce *this* kingdom to obedience." He was farther charged with having counselled the royal declaration which reflected so bitterly on the last parliament ; with the seizure of the bullion in the Tower ; the proposal of coining base money ; a new levy of ship-money ; and the loan of a hundred thousand pounds from the city of London. He was accused of having told the refractory citizens that no good would be done till they were laid up by the heels, and some of their aldermen hanged for an example. It was laid to his charge that he had levied arbitrary exactions on the people of Yorkshire to maintain his troops : and, finally, that his counsels had given rise to the rout at Newburn. *

His trial.

Such were the charges on which Strafford was brought to trial : few transactions in the annals of our country have more strongly interested the nation. The writers of that age have spoken with wonder of the magnificent preparations for the solemn spectacle, the first which, on such an occasion, were made in Westminster Hall. The members of one house of parliament sat as judges ; those of the other appeared as accusers ; the most distinguished personages of the three kingdoms were assembled as spectators ; and the novelty of

* Strafford's Trial, p. 61 to 75. Nalson, Vol. II. p. 11 to 20.

the scene was farther increased by the attendance of the king and queen, who were provided with closets, from which they could, unseen, observe the whole course of the proceedings. *

Of all the vast assemblage, no one was indifferent : all discovered, in their looks and gestures, the solicitude of friends, or the bitterness of enemies. The king, aware that the charges against Strafford rested on his zealous endeavours to enforce the plan of government so dear to his majesty's heart, looked on the fate of this minister as intimately interwoven with his own authority. The courtiers, however ill-affected to Strafford, were deeply interested in the issue, by an alarming community of interests. The ladies of the court were seen ranged around the hall, with note-books in their hands, and eagerly recording every successive occurrence : entering into the passions of their fathers and husbands, they discovered, with the frankness of their sex, an unbounded zeal in the cause of the prisoner. †

On the other hand, the three kingdoms appeared, by their representatives, to call down destruction on the object of their dread. The English branded him as a traitor to the cause of liberty, as the adviser and instrument of tyranny : the Scots,

* May, p. 91. Strafford's Trial. Whitlocke, p. 41. Nalson, Vol. II.

† May, p. 92.

as an incendiary who had instigated the king to take arms against them, and who had attempted to ravage their country with a civil war. The Irish, even those very men who had so lately united in following him with their acclamations, now came forward to denounce him as an oppressor, and to demand vengeance for their sufferings. For the rest Strafford was prepared ; but this sudden change in the language of the Irish filled him with astonishment and affliction. He had mistaken the silent awe diffused by his vigour for an affectionate acquiescence in his government ; nor did he perceive that the late applauses of the Irish parliament proceeded partly from apprehension of his power, partly from a belief that he had become the distributor of the royal favours. They now saw him divested of authority, arraigned as a criminal, pursued by general hatred ; and they hoped that, by the superadded force of their accusations, they might for ever prevent his return among them.

The trial lasted fifteen days, in the course of which a number of witnesses were produced to substantiate the charges, and members of the impeaching committee daily commented on the evidence. Yet the passion with which they were transported, and their apprehension that Strafford might escape them, did not permit the Commons to trust wholly to the justice of their cause, or give the accused a fair opportunity of conducting his

defence. To prevent him from availing himself of his principal friend Sir George Radcliffe's advice and evidence, they committed that officer also to the Tower on a charge of high treason, and strictly prohibited any communication between them. Adhering rigidly to the old forms of process in cases of treason, they would not permit him to examine his witnesses upon oath. They even seemed inclined to allow him no exculpatory witnesses at all ; for he received permission to summon them only three days before the commencement of his trial, although some of them had to be brought from Ireland. He was not allowed the assistance of counsel, either in examining the witnesses, or commenting on the evidence ; and he was himself obliged to reply on the spot, after a very short interval for recollection. Though he supported his defence with consummate coolness and vigour, he could not help complaining, that, when his fortune, his reputation, his life, were at stake, he should, by an adherence to cruel usages, be denied those aids without which innocence could not assert her cause : but he was reminded that, in similar circumstances, a still harder measure had been dealt to the Earl of Mountnorris.

The charges appeared to him by no means formidable. From the first perusal, he expressed his satisfaction that there was nothing capital in them, and that their connection with high treason could

His defence.

be so easily disproved. * In his replies he maintained, that the enlarged instructions for the council of York had not been procured by his solicitations ; that the specified instances of oppression in the northern counties were committed after his departure for Ireland ; and that the words imputed to him were directly the reverse of those which he had spoken. With regard to Ireland, he vindicated his opinion that it was a conquered country, and that the king's prerogative was much greater there than in England. He contended that all the judgments, charged on him as arbitrary, were delivered by competent courts, in none of which he had above a single voice : that the prevention of persons from quitting the kingdom without licence, as well as placing soldiers at free quarters on the disobedient, were transactions consistent with ancient usages : that the flax manufacture owed all its prosperity to his exertions, and that his prohibition tended to remedy some barbarous and unjust methods of sorting the yarn : that his bargains for the customs and tobacco were profitable both to the crown and the country : and that the oath which he had enforced on the Scots was required by the critical circumstances of the times, and fully approved by his government. In regard to his transactions in England, it appeared in evi-

* *Strafford's Letters*, Vol. II. p. 413.

dence, that hostility against Scotland having been resolved on, he had merely counselled an offensive in preference to a defensive war : that his expressions relative to supplies were in strict conformity to the established maxim of the constitution ; * that, in such emergencies as a foreign invasion, the sovereign was entitled to levy contributions, or adopt any other measure for the public defence. The words relative to the employment of the Irish army were denied by some, and affirmed by none, of the privy-counsellors then present, except his enemy Sir Henry Vane, who wavered and hesitated in his testimony ; nor did even he venture to apply to the kingdom of England words uttered in a committee expressly assembled to consider of the reduction of Scotland. He observed that his harsh expressions towards the citizens of London were heard by only one interested individual, and not heard by others who stood as near him : he proved that the contributions in Yorkshire were voluntary ; and that the proposals for seizing the bullion and coining base money did not proceed from him. The other charges were abandoned by the Commons, as either incapable of proof, or irrelative to the main question. †

The replies of Strafford to the several articles of

* *Salus populi suprema lex.*

† *Strafford's Trial*, p. 61 to 75. *Nelson*, Vol. II. p. 21 to 20.

the impeachment seemed greatly to invalidate the allegations of his accusers; and when he proceeded to repel the inference of high treason, his arguments and eloquence appeared irresistible. He exposed the absurdity of alleging that a number of smaller offences, when added together, should compose a great crime, to which none of them, separately, bore any affinity. He recounted the statutes which distinctly specified all treasonable offences; and which expressly provided that no other crime should be construed into treason. It was in the power of parliament to add other offences to this list; but was it just that he should be condemned on a law subsequently enacted? Or if, as some pretend, constructive or accumulative treason be recognised by our laws, let them produce the evidence of this new, this wonderful discovery.

“Where,” said he, “has this fire lain concealed, during so many centuries, that no smoke should discover it, till it thus bursts forth to consume me and my children? Hard it is that a punishment should precede the promulgation of a law, that men should suffer by a law subsequent to the deed. If this be admitted, who shall account himself secure in his innocence? And in what is law preferable to the will of an arbitrary master? If I sail on the Thames, and split my vessel on an anchor, should there be no buoy to give me warning, the

owner shall pay me damages : but if it be marked out, then I pass it at my own peril. Where is the mark set on this crime ? Where is the token by which I should discover it ? If it be hid, if it lie concealed under water, no human foresight or prudence could have prevented my sudden destruction. If we are thus to be beset, let us lay aside all human wisdom, let us rely solely on divine revelation : for certainly nothing less than revelation can save us from these hidden snares.

“ It is now full two hundred and forty years since treason was defined ; and so long has it been since any man was accused as I am for an alleged crime of this nature. We have lived, my lords, happily to ourselves at home : we have lived gloriously abroad to the world : let us be content with what our fathers have left us : let not our ambition carry us to be more knowing than they were in the art of destroying. Great wisdom will it be in your lordships, for yourselves, for your posterity, for the whole kingdom, to cast from you into the fire these bloody and mysterious volumes of arbitrary and constructive treasons, as the primitive Christians did their books of curious arts ; and to betake yourselves to the plain letter of the statute, which distinctly points out where the crime is, and how it is to be avoided. Let us not, to our own destruction, awake those sleeping lions, by shaking

up those musty records, which have lain for so many ages, by the wall, forgotten and neglected.

“ To all my afflictions add not this, my lords, the most severe of any ; that I, for my other sins, not for my treasons, should be the means of introducing a precedent so fatal in its consequences to the whole kingdom. Do not, through me, wound the commonwealth.

“ These gentlemen at the bar, indeed, say, and I believe sincerely, that they speak for the commonwealth : but, under favour, in this particular it is I who speak for the commonwealth. From charges like these of which I am accused, such miseries will in a few years overtake the nation, as are spoken of in the preamble of the statute enacted to prevent them ; no man will know what to say, or to do, from the dread of committing treason.

“ Impose not, my lords, such difficulties on ministers of state, as to deter them from cheerfully serving their king and country. If you examine them, under such severe penalties, by every grain, by every little weight, the scrutiny will be intolerable. The public affairs of the kingdom must be left waste, and be for ever abandoned by every man who has honour, or fortune, or reputation to lose.

“ My lords, I have troubled you much longer than I should have done. Were it not for the in-

terest of those dear pledges which a saint in heaven has left me, I should be loth"—here his weeping stopped him—"what I forfeit for myself is nothing; but I confess, that, what I forfeit for them wounds me to the very soul. Pardon my infirmity: something I should have added; but I see I shall not be able, and therefore let it pass.

"And now, my lords, I thank God, by his blessing I have been taught, that the afflictions of this present life are not to be compared with the eternal happiness which awaits us hereafter. And so, my lords, even so, with all humility, and with all tranquillity of mind, I submit myself freely to your judgments; and whether that righteous doom be life or death, I shall, with gratitude and confidence, repose myself on the goodness of my Almighty Preserver."*

"Certainly," says the chairman of the impeaching committee, "never any man acted such a part, on such a theatre, with more wisdom, constancy, and eloquence, with greater reason, judgment, and temper, and with a better grace in all his words and actions, than did this great and excellent person;" and he moved the hearts of all his auditors, some few excepted, to remorse and pity. † But if the

* Strafford's Trial, p. 659, 660. Whitlocke, p. 44. Nelson, Vol. II. p. 122.

† Whitlocke, p. 44.

hearts of his judges were touched by his eloquence, their judgments were farther convinced by the arguments of his counsel, Mr Lane, with regard to the point of law. From his statements, it clearly appeared, that, even after the enactment of the law of treason, in the reign of Edward the Third, men had still been harassed by charges of treason, for offences not specified in that act, but brought within it by construction : that express statutes had been passed in the reigns of Henry the Fourth and Henry the Eighth, to prevent these abuses, and to restrict treason entirely to the specified offences ; and that more instances than one had occurred of persons accused of high treason, for offences similar to those of Strafford, and yet, in consequence of these acts, found guilty only of felony. *

Prosecuted
by a Bill of
Attainder.

The more violent leaders of the Commons were exasperated by this successful resistance. They affected to consider it degrading to their dignity to reply to Strafford's counsel, and they soon showed a determination to effect their object, at the expence of justice, by adopting a proceeding, which overstepped the established forms and maxims of law, and against which innocence could form no protection. Dreading the decision of the Lords, if the charges and evidence were to be weighed by the received rules, they resolved to proceed by a

* Rushworth, Vol. III. p. 671 to 674.

bill of attainder ; and to enact, first in their own house, and afterwards in the Lords, that Strafford was guilty of high treason, and merited its punishment. Great was the indignation of the more moderate at a proceeding which, breaking down the fences of the constitution, erected the House of Commons into a tribunal of justice ; which took away the most powerful bulwarks of innocence ; and which converted into judges the men who had just acted as accusers. In vain was it urged by the accusers, that the safety of the country required such an arbitrary power to be lodged somewhere : the permanent power of condemning men without law was evidently more dangerous to a nation than any individual crime whatever. An offence so heinous as to approach to high treason, might doubtless admit of being punished under some other class of crimes : the charges against Strafford might legally amount to felony or high misdemeanours, and might justify imprisonment, exile, and perpetual removal from the councils of his sovereign.

The Commons, having once outstepped the dictates of equity in their prosecution, were led into proceedings equally absurd and iniquitous. The alleged advice of Strafford to employ the Irish army against England, had hitherto rested on the solitary evidence of Sir Harry Vane ; but the laws of treason required two witnesses. The younger

Vane, on inspecting some of his father's papers, discovered a minute, as it appeared, of the consultation, at which the words imputed to Strafford were alleged to have been spoken ; and this minute was recognised by the elder Vane as taken down by him at the time, in his quality of secretary. In reporting this discovery to the house, Mr Pym maintained, in a solemn argument, that the written evidence of Sir Harry Vane at the period of the transaction, and his oral evidence at present, ought to be considered as equivalent to the testimony of two witnesses : and this extravagant position was actually sanctioned by the house, and adopted as a ground of their proceedings. *

Bill passed
in the House
of Com-
mons.

Several members, even among the personal enemies of Strafford, remonstrated against this complicated injustice ; and Lord Digby, a distinguished leader, who had signalized himself by his active prosecution of the impeachment, exposed in glowing colours the iniquity of measures revolting to his honour and conscience. † But a large majority would listen to nothing but the destruction of their dreaded adversary : and with only fifty-nine dissenting voices, the bill of attainder was passed. It was accompanied by the remarkable clause, that nothing done in the present case should hereafter

* Strafford's Trial. Whitlocke, p. 63. Clarendon, Vol. I.

† Strafford's Trial, p. 60.

be drawn into a precedent. * After being precipitately hurried through the house, it was presented to the Lords with an address which expressed all the virulence of the prosecutors. St John, who spoke on this occasion, asserted, that, in this process of attainder, it was sufficient if their lordships were convinced in their own minds, though no evidence at all had been adduced : and as to the appeal of the culprit to the laws, " it is true," said he, " we give law to hares and deers, for they are beasts of chace ; but as to beasts of prey, as to foxes and wolves, it never was accounted either cruelty or foul play to knock them on the head, wherever they can be found." †

The Lords, more attached to the court, and dreading the effects of so violent a precedent, were neither moved by these arguments, nor inspired with these passions, and seemed not unwilling to let the bill of attainder rest undiscussed on their table. But the popular leaders were not without means to accelerate its progress. As a warning to the Lords, the names of the fifty-nine commoners, who had voted against the bill of attainder, were posted up in conspicuous places, with this superscription, *The Straffordians, the men who, to save a traitor, would betray their country.* ‡ The

* Strafford's Trial, p. 757.

† Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 703. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 232.

‡ May, p. 86.

Commons recommenced their inquiries into abuses ; and by an exposition of the illegal instructions and proceedings of the council of York, highly aggravated the popular clamour against Strafford. The meaner actors in the revolutionary drama now began to appear ; alarms were diffused that dangerous conspiracies were entered into by the Catholics ; that great multitudes of them were assembling in Lancashire ; that they held secret meetings in caves, and under-ground in Surry ; that they had framed a plot to blow up the Thames with gunpowder, and destroy the city by the inundation ; that great provisions of arms were making beyond sea for their enterprises ; * and that all these designs originated with the arch-traitor, whose forfeited life was still spared for new treasons. Such rumours, indeed, were credited only by the vulgar, but the more intelligent were thrown into consternation by the discovery of some crude and abortive attempts to facilitate the escape of Strafford, and bring up the army to London for the support of the king against the Parliament. The Commons, as if agitated with the most fearful presages, hastened to draw up an oath for the defence of the constitution, which they solemnly took themselves, and enjoined on the rest of the nation. †

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 249.

† Clarendon, Vol. I. Strafford's Trial, p. 735. Whittlecke, p. 45.

Charles eagerly embraced every expedient to save the life of his minister. To abate the violence of the popular leaders, he promoted some of them to the most conspicuous stations in the government; but as they ascribed their honours to the support of the Parliament, they continued more subservient to that body than to him. By the advice of Lord Say, one of those new counsellors, he now repaired to the House of Lords, and attempted to defeat the bill of attainder, by assuring them it was vain to expect his assent to a measure which his conscience could not approve; that no fear, no consideration whatever should make him adjudge Strafford guilty of treason. He acknowledged, however, that the earl had been convicted of such high misdemeanours as disqualified him from ever holding any public trust, even that of a high constable; and declared his readiness to concur in an act to render him utterly incapable of bearing any office. *

On hearing of this intended interference, Strafford had earnestly dissuaded it; † and on learning that the step had been actually taken, he no longer encouraged a hope of preservation. ‡ His presages were fatally true. No sooner had the king quitted the House of Lords, than the Commons, in a

* Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 734. Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 255.

† Clarendon, *ibid.* ‡ Radcliffe.

transport of impatience, declared this last act of his majesty an unparalleled breach of privilege: that if the king might thus notice the bills passing in Parliament, and forejudge their counsels by declaring his own opinion, it would be impossible to enact salutary laws, or reform the abuses of the government. They called on those who had taken the oath in support of the constitution to rally round the Parliament, and not suffer its privileges to be thus wantonly violated. *

Passed in
the House of
Lords.

The passions of the Commons were communicated to the multitude without; and next day, vast crowds surrounded the House of Peers, crying aloud for justice. As the Lords passed along, the names of the traitorous Straffordians were sounded in their ears; and those suspected of being hostile to the bill were even pressed and jostled so rudely as to endanger their persons. † There was no longer room for resistance or delay. Out of fourscore lords who had been present during the whole trial, only forty-six now ventured to attend; and when the bill at length came to a vote, it was carried with eleven dissenting voices. ‡

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 256. † Ibid.

‡ Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 256. The Lords proceeded in passing the bill of attainder after the same manner as if the impeachment had been persisted in. They voted Strafford guilty on two articles: the fifteenth, "for levying money in Ireland by force in a warlike manner;" and the nineteenth, "for imposing an illegal oath on

The cries, which had proved so powerful in Westminster Hall, now resounded, with redoubled fury, around the palace ; and the king began to dread that himself and his family might fall victims to the populace. He summoned his privy-counsellors to devise means for his safety ; and they declared no other could be found but his assent to the death of Strafford : he represented the violence which he should thus impose on his conscience ; and they referred him to the bishops, the interpreters of conscientious scruples. The prelates, trembling under their own apprehensions, earnestly concurred in the advice of the privy-counsellors. The Archbishop of York was at no loss for casuistry to justify this measure : he contended, “ that a king had a public conscience, and a private conscience, and that the latter ought always to yield to the former : that the conscience of a king to preserve his kingdom, the conscience of a husband to preserve his wife, the conscience of a father to preserve his children, all of which were now in danger, ought abundantly to outweigh the conscience of a master or a friend, to preserve his friend or his servant : that therefore the king was bound, even for conscience sake, to ratify the

the subjects of Ireland.” Whitlocke, p. 45. These, therefore, were the grounds on which the Lords condemned Strafford to die.

bill of attainder." * Juxon alone vindicated the dignity of his order, by telling the king he ought not to sanction a measure which his conscience could not approve. †

*Strafford's
letter to the
king.*

Strafford, informed of the struggle which the king's honour and conscience maintained with the apprehensions and entreaties which encompassed him, resolved to give a new proof of his magnanimity and devotion. He wrote to the king, reminding him of his loyalty and his innocence; and stating the severe contests which he had undergone between the ruin of himself and his family, and the imminent dangers of his sovereign; between the things most desired, most dreaded by men, between life and death. He had, however, at length formed the resolution which best became him: and, therefore, besought his majesty to give his sanction to the bill of attainder. "In this," added he, "my consent shall more acquit you to God than all the world can do besides. To a willing man there is no injury." ‡

*Bill sanc-
tioned by
the king.*

The magnanimity of this letter made little impression on the courtiers who surrounded the king: they urged that the free consent of Strafford to his own death absolved his majesty from every scruple

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 257.

† Nalson, Vol. II. p. 193. Father Orleans, p. 39.

‡ Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 774. Whitlocke, p. 45.

of conscience. * The resolution of Charles was at length overpowered ; and he gave, by commission, his assent to the death of his faithful minister. †

Strafford was aware that his life was in the hands of his enemies ; that no chance of escape remained ; but he was not prepared to expect a dereliction by his sovereign. When Secretary Carleton waited on him with the intelligence, and stated his own consent as the circumstance which had chiefly moved the king ; the astonished prisoner inquired, if his majesty had indeed sanctioned the bill ? And when assured of the fatal truth, he raised his eyes to heaven, and, laying his hand on his heart, exclaimed, “ Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men : for in them there is no salvation.” ‡

But he soon resumed his wonted fortitude, and began to prepare for his fate : the short interval of three days was allowed him, and he employed it in the concerns of his friends and his family. He humbly petitioned the House of Lords to have compassion on his innocent children. He wrote his last instructions to his eldest son, exhorting him to be obedient and grateful to those entrusted with his education ; to be sincere and faithful towards his sovereign, if he should ever be called

Preparations
for death.

* Clarendon, Vol. I. p. 258.

† Strafford's Trial, p. 743.

‡ Whitlocke, p. 46.

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into public service : and as he foresaw that the revenues of the church would be despoiled, he charged him to take no part in a sacrilege which would assuredly be followed by the curse of heaven. * He shed tears over the untimely fate of Wandesford, whom he had entrusted with the care of his government and of his family; and who, on learning the dangers of his friend and patron, had fallen a victim to grief and despair. In a parting letter to his wife, he endeavoured to support her courage; and expressed a hope that his successor, Lord Dillon, would behave with tenderness to her and her orphans. On being refused an interview with Sir George Ratcliffe and Archbishop Land, his fellow prisoners in the Tower, he conveyed a tender adieu to the one, and to the other an earnest request for his prayers and his parting blessing. † If his feelings were deeply touched by these remembrances, they were still more painfully wounded by a letter from the man whom, of all others, he had most severely injured. The Earl of Mountnorris recounted the hardships which he had undergone, the ruin of his fortune, the distresses of his family : he forgave Strafford for being the author of all these calamities, but entreated that he would not leave the world without in some degree

* Strafford's Letters, Vol. II. Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 782.

† Rushworth, *ibid.*

repairing the injustice, by making it known that these sufferings had been undeserved. *

During this interval, the king, dissatisfied with himself, looked around for some expedient to save the life of Strafford. He sent for Hollis, the Earl's brother-in-law, who acted with the popular leaders, but had taken no share in the present prosecution; and demanded what could be done for the preservation of his kinsman. Hollis advised that Strafford should petition his majesty for a short respite to settle his affairs; and that the king should next day go to the House of Peers, with this petition in his hands, and request that their Lordships would consent to a change of the minister's punishment from death to perpetual imprisonment; and that they would endeavour to procure the consent of the Commons to this mitigation. † At the king's desire, Hollis made out a draught of a speech; and hastened to exert all his influence in procuring the acquiescence of the popular leaders. He succeeded with several, and had sanguine hopes of being able, with the assistance of the court party, to accomplish his purpose. But Strafford had unrelenting enemies at court, who found means to represent to the queen, that he had bargained for

* Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. II. p. 135.

† Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 757.

his own life, by a promise to accuse her, and betray her counsels. Under this persuasion, which her ancient enmity made her easily receive, she prevailed on the king to lay aside his intention of repairing to the House of Lords; to convey his requests to them in a letter sent by the hands of the Prince of Wales; and even to abandon his whole proposal, by adding this cold and indifferent postscript, *If he must die, it were charity to relieve him till Saturday.* And hence, when the requests of the letter came to be considered by the peers, the court party united with their most violent enemies in procuring its rejection. *

Execution.
Wednesday,
May 12,
1641.

The day of Strafford's execution threw a brighter lustre over his name than his most memorable actions. As he quitted the Tower, he looked up to the windows of Laud's apartments, and seeing the aged prelate, who had come to take a last leave of his friend, entreated his prayers and his blessing. The archbishop, lifting up his hands, gave a fervent benediction; and, overcome with the scene, fell motionless on the ground. "Farewell, my lord," cried Strafford, "God protect your innocence." † As he passed along to Tower-hill, on which the scaffold was erected, the populace eager-

* Burnet, Hist. Vol. I. p. 41, 42.

† Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 762. Nelson, Vol. II.

ly thronged to the spectacle, and beheld his noble deportment with admiration. His figure was tall and stately, his features grave and dignified : the mildness which had taken place of the usual severity of his forehead expressed repentance enlivened by hope, and fortitude tempered by resignation. In the multitude around him he saw nothing to damp his courage, or disturb his composure ; the same men who had so loudly demanded his death, now gazed in profound silence on the intrepid victim. He looked on them with complacency ; and, frequently taking off his hat, bowed to the spectators on either hand. * In his address to the people from the scaffold, he assured them that he submitted to his sentence with perfect resignation ; that, freely and from his heart, he forgave all the world. " I speak," said he, " in the presence of Almighty God, before whom I stand, there is not a displeasing thought that ariseth in me to any man." He declared that, however his actions might have been misinterpreted, his intentions had always been upright : that he was attached to parliaments ; that he was devoted to the constitution and to the church of England : that he ever considered the interests of the king and people as inseparably united : and that, living or dying, the prosperity

* Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 772, 773.

of his country was his fondest wish. But he expressed his fears that it augured ill for the people's happiness, to write the commencement of a reformation in letters of blood. Turning to the friends who attended him on the scaffold, he took a solemn leave, and charged his brother with his blessing and final adieu to his wife and children. "And now," said he, "I have nigh done. One stroke will make my wife a widow, my dear children fatherless, deprive my poor servants of their beloved master, and separate me from my affectionate brother and all my friends. But let God be to you, and to them, all in all." While he disrobed himself, he declared "that he looked on the approach of death without any apprehension; and that he now laid his head on the block with the same tranquillity as he had ever laid it on his pillow." He stretched out his hand as a signal to the executioner; and, at one blow, his head was severed from his body. *

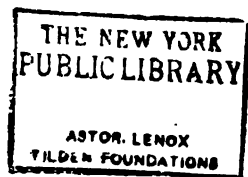
Thus perished the Earl of Strafford, in the forty-ninth year of his age, accompanied by the admiration of all who witnessed his end, and by the mingled reproaches and lamentations of the rest of his countrymen. The circumstances of his death, however unhappy, at least proved fortunate

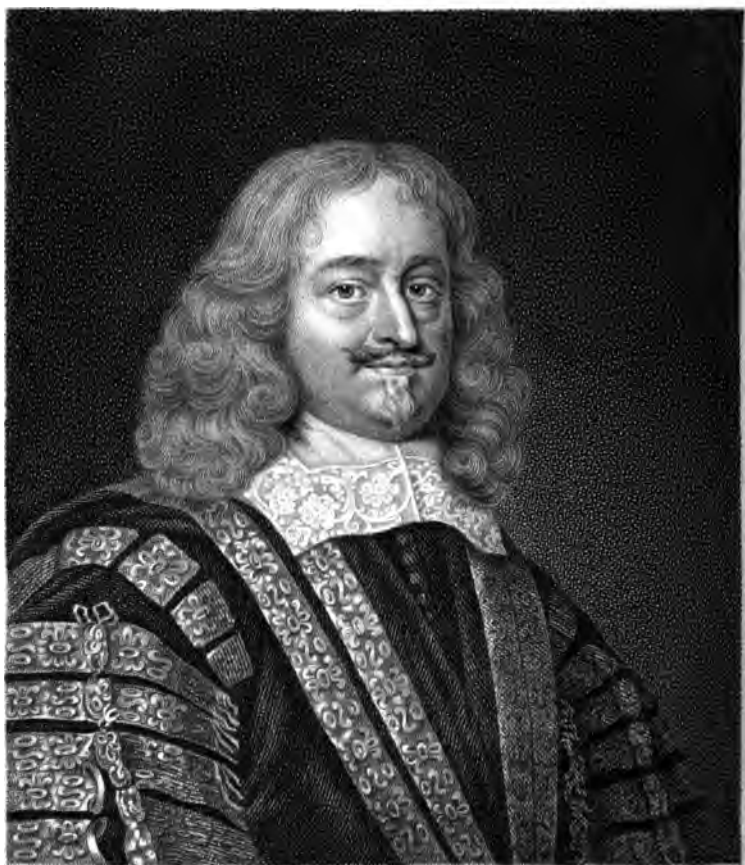
* Rushworth, Vol. VIII. p. 759, 760, 761.

to his memory. Had his offences not been magnified beyond truth ; had he, under the pressure of a just sentence, wasted the remainder of his days in exile, or in the languid obscurity of a prison, he would have had little claim on the sympathy of the world : or had he escaped from the hands of his enemies, and by some daring enterprise, given the first signal for civil convulsions, he would have caused the good and the wise to join in a common prayer for his overthrow. But his accusers, by the unjust means employed to effect his destruction, turned the eyes of mankind from his trespasses to their own ; and at length produced applause where they meant to excite detestation. They doomed their victim to a fate which could not fail to excite commiseration ; and they placed him on a theatre where his fortitude and lofty demeanour assumed the character of transcendent virtues. To the tragical termination of his own life, Charles reproached himself with the weakness which had sacrificed his most able and faithful minister. * Even the parliament, a few weeks after his death, mitigated the most severe consequences of their sen-

* In a letter to the Earl of Clarendon from Newcastle, Charles expresses his deep contrition for " that base, unworthy concession concerning Strafford ; for which," he adds, " I have been most justly punished." Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. II. p. 296.

tence to his children ; and, in a succeeding reign, the attainder was reversed, the proceedings obliterated from the public records, and his son restored to all his fortune and honours.





Freeman sc

*Edward Hyde .
Earl of Clarendon .*

EDWARD HYDE,

EARL OF CLARENDON.

Of the illustrious men, whose talents were called ^{Birth.} into action by the civil wars, few have transmitted to posterity a more respected name than Edward Hyde. He was descended from a family which inherited the estate of Norbury in Cheshire, from the times of the Saxon monarchy. His own birth-place was Dinton in Wiltshire, where his father, though a younger brother, enjoyed a competent fortune. His early education was conducted at ^{February 18, 1600.} home, under the tuition of an able teacher : but his principal improvement arose from the care and conversation of his father, who had travelled in his youth, and now delighted to communicate to his son his observations on the appearance and manners of different countries. *

Edward, being a younger son, was destined for ^{Education, at Oxford;} the church ; and, with this view, was sent to the university of Oxford in his fourteenth year. But, ^{1624.} on the death of his elder brother, which soon after

* Clarendon's Life, by himself. Edit. 1759, p. 6.

took place, his destination was altered ; and he was now designed for the more flattering, though less certain, profession of the law. He quitted the university with the reputation rather of talents than of industry ; and from some dangerous habits, particularly that of drinking, in which he had been initiated, he afterwards looked on his early removal as not the least fortunate incident of his life. *

In the
Temple.

He commenced his professional studies in the Middle Temple, under the direction of his uncle, Sir Nicholas Hyde, then treasurer of that society, and soon afterwards Chief Justice of the King's Bench. The advantages of this connection were for some time rendered fruitless by illness : an attack of small-pox endangered his life, and an aguish complaint obliged him, for upwards of a year, to relinquish his studies. Nor was his application considerable even after his negligence had no longer an apology from the want of health.

1627. As London was at that time full of young officers, who were to be employed in the Duke of Buckingham's enterprises against France and Spain, Hyde found among them a society more agreeable to his taste and habits than among his fellow-students : and another year was lost amidst the pleasures of dissipation. When these dangerous companions were removed by peace, he still felt little inclina-

* *Life*, p. 7.

tion to immure himself amidst the records of the law. He was fond of polite literature, and particularly attached to the Latin classics ; he therefore bestowed only so much attention on his less agreeable professional studies as was sufficient to save his credit with his uncle. *

The death of this relative seemed to deprive him of many advantages : but he had now resolved to attend more seriously to his principal objects ; and, without abandoning either that literature or that conversation in which he delighted, to devote himself chiefly to the business of his profession. To recall, as he informs us, those wandering desires which render the mind inconstant and irresolute, he resolved to enter into the married state : but his first pursuit, which had merely a convenient estate for its object, was unsuccessful, yet produced no lasting uneasiness. In his next advances, his heart was more deeply interested. He married the daughter of Sir George Ayliffe, a young lady very beautiful and nobly connected ; but, after the enjoyment of only six months of happiness, he had the affliction to see her suddenly ravished from him by the small-pox. The despondency produced by this misfortune for some time unfitted him for any active exertion ; and only the authority of his father, to whom he ever paid implicit obedience,

Marriage,
1628.

* Life, p. 8, 9.

could restrain him from going abroad to indulge more freely in his melancholy. Three years elapsed before the utmost importunity of his friends could induce him to turn his thoughts to another union ; when this young widower, who had not yet passed his twenty-fourth year, at length married the daughter of Sir Thomas Aylesbury, Master of Requests to the king ; and by her he had afterwards a numerous progeny. *

1632.

Success at
the bar.

The success of Hyde, on his appearance at the bar, greatly surpassed the expectations of his contemporaries. He had, indeed, been very punctual in the performance of all those public exercises to which he was bound by the rules of the profession : but his habits, his society, his studies, seemed to indicate that he had in view some other course of life. He seldom dined in the hall of his inn, and there were few of his own profession with whom he maintained more than a formal acquaintance. But he had been careful to form connections which procured him a higher estimation, and which contributed much more directly to his success. He had laid it down as a rule, to be always found in the best company ; and to attain, by every honourable means, an intimate friendship with the most considerable persons of the kingdom. While only a student of law, he enjoyed the socie-

* Life, p. 11, 12, 16.

ty of Ben Jonson, the most celebrated wit of that age ; of Selden, the most skilled of all English lawyers in the ancient constitution and history of his country ; of May, a distinguished scholar, and afterwards the historian of the parliament ; of Sir Kenelm Digby, who was equally noted and acceptable in the camp and the court. Among those whom he had bound to himself by the most intimate ties of friendship, he could recount some of the most learned and celebrated divines, at a period when the clergy enjoyed peculiar distinction, and the church was an object of ambition ; Sheldon, Morley, Earles, Hales, and, above all, Chillingworth, whose amiable qualities rendered him as beloved by his friends, as his controversial talents caused him to be feared by his antagonists ; Edmund Waller, who was not less admired by his contemporaries as an orator, than by posterity as a poet, was also among his intimate associates : but the friend whom he regarded with the most tender attachment, and the most unqualified admiration, was Sir Lucius Carey, afterwards Lord Falkland, whom he delights to describe as the most accomplished gentleman, scholar, and statesman of his age. *

Nor did he neglect to form an intimacy with those who occupied a more prominent station in

* Life, p. 36, 37, 39.

the eyes of the world. His zealous endeavours to procure reparation for a near relative of his first wife, a lady of high quality, whose reputation had been sullied in an amour, introduced him to a familiar intercourse with all her connections, persons of the first distinction at court : and, among others, with the Marquis of Hamilton, at that time the principal favourite of the king. From his reception by Lord Coventry, by the Earls of Pembroke, Manchester, Holland, and the other principal officers of the court, he found a great increase of consequence accrue to him in Westminster Hall : but what most contributed to his political influence was a friendship which he found means to cultivate with Archbishop Laud. After the death of Weston, Earl of Portland, the treasury was put into the hands of commissioners ; and Laud, being among the number, proceeded with his usual industry to examine into the state of the customs, and discovered some instances in which the late lord treasurer had greatly harassed the merchants for the benefit of some favoured officers of the revenue. While his grace anxiously investigated this subject, Hyde was accidentally mentioned to him as a lawyer with whom the merchants had consulted on the means of relief, and who could give him the fullest information. An interview was the consequence of this intimation ; and so high an opinion did Laud conceive of the young counsellor's talents,

that he expressed a desire to see him frequently, employed him on several occasions of consequence, and took every opportunity to make known the esteem in which he held him. *

Such countenance from the prime minister procured him the most flattering reception in his profession. He was treated by the judges, and the more eminent counsellors, with a consideration to which no other lawyer of his years could pretend; and clients became anxious to place their causes in the hands of a man who enjoyed such general reputation. He soon obtained considerable business, and might have procured much more; but he had determined that the thirst of money should not deprive him of those friendships and relaxations, without which life would have lost its sweetest attractions. He contrived, by a proper distribution of his time, to enjoy these pleasures, with as little hindrance as possible to his professional avocations. The hours of dinner, (which, at that period, were seldom later than twelve or one o'clock,) he always gave to the society of his friends; and by that means continued to retain all his more valued intimacies. The morning was occupied in the courts of law; and the afternoon he dedicated to the business of his profession, to taking instructions, and

* Life, p. 13, 27, 60.

forming his opinions. Yet he never suffered himself to be deprived of some hours, which he devoted to his favourite literature, and which he usually borrowed from sleep, or from leisure procured by habitually abstaining from supper. The vacations he gave wholly to literature and conversation ; nor did he ever spend any of those intervals on the more lucrative occupations of the circuits. When he quitted London during two months of the summer, it was only to retire to his country seat in Wiltshire, where his neighbours eagerly resorted to partake of his hospitality. *

He thus continued for some years to enjoy a life every way to his satisfaction. His domestic comfort was secured by a wife, who entirely dedicated herself to his views ; and by a promising family of three sons and a daughter, whom she brought him during this happy interval. Hyde was of a disposition to enter thoroughly into the enjoyments of social life. A competent fortune which he derived from inheritance, and an unusually rapid success in his profession, enabled him to live in a far more splendid style than was customary with lawyers. † In the company of Lord Conway, and some other noted epicures of that age, he had acquired a full relish for the pleasures of the table ; and as he discoursed learnedly on these topics, he might have

* Life, p. 28.

† Life, p. 66, 68.

been suspected of excesses in which he did not indulge.

It must, however, be recorded to his honour, that he won the countenance of the great by no improper compliances, or degrading flattery. He made no scruple in expressing his opinions, even when he knew they would prove unacceptable. Of this an instance is recorded in his intercourse with Archbishop Laud. The primate's habitual manner was that of a man who means well, but deems it superfluous to pay any regard to the ordinary civilities of life. His want of breeding perpetually disgusted those who approached him ; and raised him up innumerable enmities. Hyde, who was aware of the archbishop's rectitude, and who concluded that his indiscreet conduct proceeded from the want of an advising friend, took a fit opportunity to mention to his grace the general prejudice which his harsh carriage excited ; and to state some late instances in which his seeming haughtiness had given offence. Laud took this admonition in good part ; defended himself on the ground of his good intentions, yet allowed the infirmity of his temper ; and from that time forward received Hyde with increased kindness and familiarity. *

* Life, p. 63. See the character of Laud by Hyde in the Appendix, p. vii.

The estimation which our young counsellor might have lost among the grave and prudent, by the dissipation of his youth, he soon recovered by the evidence which he gave of a staid and sober judgment. He was observed to have become thoroughly enamoured of the business of his profession : and while he attracted around him persons of distinction by the liberality of his expenditure, he still increased his estate by some convenient purchases of land. Although naturally proud and passionate, and much given to disputation, yet so well had he subdued these vices of his temper by the influence of reflection and good company, that he now appeared affable, courteous, and obliging. The zeal which he manifested both for the doctrine and the worship of the established church, and the attachment which he expressed to the king, secured to him the favour of the most powerful body in the state : people spoke with applause of his liberality, of the firmness of his friendships, and of his unblemished integrity. *

In parliament,
1640.

Such was the happy and respectable condition in which Hyde was overtaken by the first commotions of the civil wars. Being chosen a member of the parliament which met in April 1640, he did not suffer his known attachment to the court to prevent him from contributing his endeavours for the reforma-

* Life, p. 69.

tion of the abuses, with which the subjects were grievously oppressed. In his first speech, he denounced the Marshal's Court, a court which had of late years begun to take cognizance of disrespectful words to the higher orders of the state, and had been guilty of various acts of oppression not less wanton than intolerable.* His severe exposure of this absurd and odious tribunal acquired him much repute among the friends of reformation. †

It was with deep regret that he perceived the intention of the court to break with this parliament. He had almost procured a resolution favourable to the question of supplies, when the peremptory demand for twelve subsidies, which Sir Harry Vane

* Some curious instances of the vexatious proceedings of this court are mentioned in the speech of Hyde. A waterman, who demanded an exorbitant fare from a citizen, having met with a refusal, pointed to a badge on his coat; and, being desired by the citizen to be gone *with his goose*, complained of the insult to the Marshal's Court. Here the unfortunate citizen found that the badge which he had mistaken for a *goose* was in fact a *swan*, and the crest of an earl, whose retainer the waterman was; and for this grievous insult to nobility, he was subjected to such excessive damages as caused his ruin. On another occasion, a gentleman, having been waited on by his tailor, to demand a considerable sum of money, which had been long due, replied only by bad words, and attempted to thrust the importunate creditor out of doors. The tailor, irritated by this usage, ventured to tell him that he was as good a man as himself: upon which he was summoned before the Marshal's Court, and glad to give up all his demands in lieu of damages.

† Life, p. 72.

made in the king's name, threw every thing into confusion. * He afterwards endeavoured to prevail on Laud to interpose his influence with the king against the fatal design of a dissolution : but he found the archbishop possessed with too bad an opinion of the Commons to become a mediator. †

In parliament, Nov. 3, 1640.

In the long parliament, which met towards the close of the same year, he found his known opinions and connections far from acceptable. His attachment to Archbishop Laud, and his devotion to the established ecclesiastical government, were unpromising circumstances to those who meditated the overthrow of the prelate, and considerable changes in the church. Some fruitless attempts were made to find a flaw in his election, and to excite jealousies between him and his friends : but the leaders of the popular party were at length contented to dissemble their animosity, and soften his opposition by civilities. ‡

Patriotic loyalty.

From the manner in which the court and the nation stood affected to each other, Hyde perceived that important political discussions were now at hand ; he, therefore, from the commencement of this parliament, laid aside his gown, and devoted himself wholly to public business. By standing forth the resolute advocate of what he considered the established law, and by equally opposing the

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 109. Folio edit. 1702.

† Life, p. 73.

‡ Ibid. p. 76.

encroachments of the court and of the people, he soon obtained consideration with all moderate men ; and was, without suspicion of partiality, employed as chairman of the most important committees. He now procured the annihilation of the Marshal's Court : * and having been appointed chairman of the committee for investigating the abuses of the council of York, he did not permit his regard for Strafford to prevent him from exposing, in glowing colours, the enormous oppressions to which the northern counties had been subjected by that jurisdiction. † Every one admired the conscientious part which Hyde acted on this occasion, as it evidently contributed to increase that indignation against the Earl, which, from personal feelings, he would have been glad to diminish. With equal rectitude and zeal, he conducted the impeachment of three Barons of the Exchequer, for iniquitous decisions in support of exactions imposed by royal authority in defiance of law. ‡

A most important change had now taken place in the relative situation of the king and the parliament. Charles had not only failed in his attempt to render himself independent of that assembly, but had brought himself into a situation of

* Whitlocke, p. 51.

† Rushworth, Vol. IV. p. 230. *Lives of the Lords Chancellor*, Vol. I. p. 6.

‡ Ibid.

such extreme difficulty, that he had now only to choose between a recourse to force or unlimited compliance. For the former he was not prepared; and by the latter, he soon became divested of his original rank in the constitution. The parliament knew that necessity alone extorted from him his present concessions, and they dreaded that he would seize the first opportunity of resuming what he had so reluctantly granted. They seemed resolved, therefore, to reduce his power within very narrow limits, and with this view judged it necessary that they themselves should be invested with exorbitant authority. By the act which rendered the parliament indissoluble unless by their own consent, they became entirely independent of the king; and the government was, in fact, converted into an irresistible oligarchy.

Hyde, with Lord Falkland and other moderate men, had concurred in the salutary acts which were passed at the commencement of this parliament, for the redress of many enormous grievances. But when they perceived that the fears of some men, and the ambition of others, induced them to draw more power into their hands than was consistent with the ancient constitution of the country, these loyal patriots took the alarm, and began to resist every change which could affect the prerogative. Hyde distinguished himself conspicuously in opposing encroachments on the privileges of the

church. At the commencement of this parliament, there appeared no intention of introducing an alteration into the form of the established church government ; Lord Say seemed the only leader in either house who regarded that form with animosity.* But the bishops, from the arbitrary maxims of government which they had abetted, and from their late oppressive proceedings in the court of high commissson, had made themselves a number of enemies, and came gradually to be ranked among the decided opponents of the parliament. At first it was proposed to deprive them of their seats in the House of Peers ; but, at a subsequent period, motions were entertained for the utter extirpation of episcopacy. All such propositions were strenuously resisted by Hyde. It was contended by those who desired to deprive the bishops of their seats in paliament, that the clergy were represented in the house of convocation, the proper assembly

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 145. Clarendon, from his personal knowledge of the parliamentary leaders and their views, assures us that, at the commencement of the long parliament, few of the members were disaffected to the church, and none seemed to entertain a prospect of its subversion. Even after the war had commenced, he tells us that " designs against the church were not yet grown popular in the two houses." Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 61. At the treaty of Uxbridge, he represents the English commissioners as zealous in the business of religion, merely to gratify their Scottish allies. Ibid. p. 448. In short, it seems uniformly his opinion, that the religious quarrel sprung out of the civil.

for debating ecclesiastical subjects ; that there was no adequate reason for allowing this profession, this class of public officers alone, their peculiar representatives in parliament ; and that the whole of this privilege had its foundation in an age of superstition, when the claims of ecclesiastics admitted of no resistance. But Hyde maintained that the antiquity of the privilege was an irrefragable argument in its favour ; that the temporal rights of the bishops were interwoven with the elements of our constitution ; and that they could not be taken away without removing indispensable land-marks. Being appointed chairman of the committee to consider of the abolition of episcopacy, he contrived to interpose so many delays and difficulties in the proceedings, that the reformers at length grew weary, and for the present abandoned the project.*

Sent to the
Tower.

His exertions in favour of the royal cause were not always unattended with personal hazard. The Commons having drawn up a remonstrance, in which they detailed all the grievances under which the nation had laboured, even those which had been redressed ; Hyde formally protested against a measure that could have no other object than to inflame the animosity of the people against the king. Protests, though usual in the House of Peers,

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 216.

had never been admitted by the Commons; and for this offence he was, for some days, committed to the Tower. *

The same occasion, however, brought him into a more intimate connection with the monarch. Charles, who could not overlook his zealous exertions in behalf of the prerogative, had already sent for him privately, and returned his acknowledgments for a support which he had in vain expected from his own immediate servants. His majesty was now presented by Lord Digby with a full answer to the remonstrance of the Parliament, which Hyde, finding his protest in vain, had drawn up, and shown in confidence to his friend, without any intention of its being made further known. † Digby, however, took the first opportunity of expatiating on its merits to the king, who accordingly requested the paper from Hyde, and published it as the reply of the king and the council, concealing the name of the real author, at his own earnest desire. ‡

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 249.

† Lord Digby had distinguished himself as a leader of the popular party, but, on the question of Strafford's attainder, had dissented from them, and gone afterwards decidedly over to the court. His subsequent conduct showed him better qualified for an opposition orator than for a minister; since his rash counsels frequently proved very prejudicial to the interests of his master.

‡ Life, p. 87.

Confidential
employ-
ment.

But it soon became necessary that he should take a more active and decided part in support of government. The king was now without a single minister in the House of Commons, who had either the courage or the inclination to stand forth as the advocate of his claims. He therefore resolved to confer the offices of state on those men, who, without any connection with the government, were daily incurring reproach and danger in its defence. Lord Falkland, who had hitherto held no direct intercourse with the court, was, to his surprise, nominated principal secretary of state; an office which he would have declined, had not Hyde, his most intimate friend, represented to him the irreparable injury which he would bring on the king's affairs, if he gave countenance to the opinion that the court was too vicious, or its condition too desperate, to receive the support of wise and virtuous men. The chancellorship of the exchequer was given to Sir John Colepepper, another independent royalist: and it was intended to deprive St John, one of the king's most bitter enemies, of the office of solicitor-general, and to confer it on Hyde. To this proposition, however, Hyde absolutely refused his assent. He represented, that the displacing of St John would only serve to exasperate the Parliament; and that he himself could render much more effectual service to his majesty, by continuing his independent exertions,

than by appearing in any official character. To these reasons the king assented; but at the same time committed to Hyde, in conjunction with Falkland and Colepepper, the whole management of his affairs in the House of Commons, with a solemn assurance that he would take no step relating to Parliament without their advice and approbation.*

But Charles on this, as on other occasions, was incapable of adhering to prudent and consistent resolutions. The new counsellors had the mortification to see a step immediately taken, without any communication with them, which rendered all their future exertions fruitless, and a civil war inevitable. The queen, a woman of a rash and violent temper, who, from her education in the court of France, had imbibed the most arbitrary notions of monarchical power, was perpetually urging her husband to confound his rebellious subjects by bold and decisive measures. The invention of Lord Digby, who was now become her favourite minister, soon suggested an attempt suitable to these counsels. By his advice, the king, who too readily entered into all precipitate designs, suddenly caused a peer and five commoners to be impeach-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 267, 269. Life, p. 88, 89. See in Appendix, the characters of Lord Digby and St John, as given by Hyde; also those of Hambden and Pym.

ed of high treason ; and accompanied this charge with a demand that they should immediately be delivered up to him for trial. The Commons, more indignant than appalled, merely replied by a message to his majesty, that the persons impeached should be forthcoming as soon as a legal charge was produced against them : but it was resolved at court, that the king, to follow up the measure with proper boldness, should next day go in person to the House, and seize on the accused members. Charles might have hesitated at so dangerous a proposal, but his resolution was speedily confirmed by the irresistible reproaches of his queen and the ladies of the court. When he presented himself in the House, he had the mortification to find, according to his own expression, that “ the birds were flown ;” and retired from his abortive attempt amidst loud and indignant cries of *Privilege ! Privilege !**

The consequences of this rash action were never retrieved. The Parliament had long apprehended that the king would, according to his custom on former dissolutions, take vengeance, by imprisonment, on those who had maintained an active opposition. But they now saw him, even while they continued to sit, attempting to inflict capital pun-

* Whitlocke, p. 52. Hist. of Reb. Vol. I. p. 282. Rushworth, Vol. IV. p. 478.

ishment on the popular advocates. The accused members were charged with an attempt to subvert the fundamental laws of the kingdom : but in the particular acts, on which this charge rested, many more had been equally implicated. Every one, therefore, took the accusation of the five members as a warning to himself ; and the more active opposers of the court from thenceforward saw no safety for themselves, but in depriving the monarch of the power to injure.

Grieved and dispirited by such irretrievable errors, Hyde, with his colleagues, continued the melancholy task of supporting a cause which every day became more hopeless. He assures us, that both he and Falkland were of opinion that the king would be overwhelmed by his enemies ; and that they engaged in the royal cause solely from a sense of duty, and with a full persuasion that this course would terminate in their own ruin. As Hyde was employed in no official capacity, and desired to appear an independent supporter of the court, he could repair to the king only by stealth : and the monarch was at times reduced to the painful necessity of meeting his faithful advocate at midnight on the back-stairs of the palace.* His task was both laborious and dangerous : he was engaged to write answers, in the king's name, to

* Life, p. 105, 106.

all the declarations of the Parliament, which soon became extremely numerous. These delicate transactions afforded an instance of the secrecy and industry of which Charles was capable on particular occasions. As it would have proved very dangerous to Hyde, had he been known as the author of these replies, it was resolved that the secret, which was known only to his friends Falkland and Colepepper, should not be communicated to any other person whatever. * Charles, therefore, when he removed to a distance from these counsellors, was under the necessity of transcribing all the voluminous replies with his own hand, before he presented them to his council ; a task which he performed for many months, though it often cost him the labour of two or three days together, and frequently interfered with the hours of sleep. †

Though the assistance which Hyde rendered to the court was concealed with the utmost caution, yet he had now become violently suspected by the popular leaders. Some of his private interviews with the king had been accidentally detected ; and it was discovered that two of the ministers, Falkland and Colepepper, repaired nightly to his house

* Falkland and Colepepper remained with Hyde in London for a considerable time after the king had quitted the Parliament and retired to York.

† Life, p. 108.

to hold private consultations. The unusual portion of time which he now devoted to his closet, combined with these circumstances, infused a suspicion that he was the author of the king's declarations; and a resolution was privately taken to deprive the royal cause of his obnoxious services, by committing him and his two associates to the Tower. This danger he for some time found means to elude; but at length he perceived it necessary to quit London, and repair to York, where the king had now assembled his court, and employed himself in appealing to the nation against the Parliament. *

Hyde now openly entered into the service of the king, but did not for some time occupy any official situation. He resisted an intention of his majesty

April 1643
Chancellor
of the Ex-
chequer.

* Life, p. 113—120. A singular incident happened to Hyde, on his arrival at York. A lodging had been prepared for his reception as a person belonging to the court, in the house of a respectable man, who expressed much satisfaction at having the adherents of the king for his inmates. But on being informed of the name of his new lodger, the landlord suddenly burst forth into violent rage, and swore he would sooner set his house on fire than suffer such a person to lodge under his roof. The servants of Hyde stood amazed at the implacable wrath which now seemed to transport the whole family; and Hyde himself was equally astonished, as he had never before visited York, nor, to his recollection, injured any of its inhabitants. The mystery, however, was quickly removed, when he discovered that his landlord had been an attorney of the Council of York, where he had earned a handsome income, till the Parliament, and Hyde, more conspicuously than any other member, had procured the abolition of that court.

March
1643.

to make room for his appointment as secretary of state, by the removal of another minister to a less profitable office ; and he waited with patience till the promotion of Sir John Colepepper to the mastership of the rolls, left vacant for him the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was at the same time knighted, and sworn of the privy council ; and he reflected with satisfaction, that this preferment had been obtained without any connection with the cabals of the court, and even without the privity of the queen. *

While any prospect remained of terminating the contest between the king and the parliament otherwise than by the sword, Hyde, with Falkland and Colepepper, continued their united exertions in the royal service. Though their tempers were dissimilar, yet their loyalty was equally ardent ; and their opinions generally coincided. Colepepper, a man of a rough and violent temper, was accustomed to triumph over the opposition of the king, from whom he often dissented, by that decisive and resolute tone which Charles could never resist. † Falkland, though the most kind-hearted, as well as the most loyal and honourable of men, could not bring himself, with a compliance which might seem connected with flattery, to assent to some of the king's most favourite notions, especial-

* Life, p. 140—141.

† Life, p. 95.

ly in regard to the church and his contradiction in these points alienated from him the affections of a sovereign for whom he had devoted his life to foreseen destruction. * Hyde was more acceptable to the king than either of his colleagues ; for, on many important points, his sentiments much more nearly coincided with those of the monarch. No extremity ought, in his opinion, to induce his majesty to sanction any change in the church establishment : this tenet was sacredly maintained by Charles ; while both Falkland and Colepepper considered the form of ecclesiastical government as a matter of comparatively little importance, and at any time to be sacrificed to the interests of the sovereign and the nation. Hyde was, like Falkland, the advocate of peace ; but even peace, he thought, ought not to be purchased by foregoing any part of the prerogative ; while Falkland was of opinion that the king ought to gratify his people by many acts of compliance, and give up a portion of his power rather than hazard the whole. †

The king, finding that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's sentiments so much corresponded with ^{Favour with the king.} his own, began to regard them with particular confidence ; and, when strongly urged to any measure, usually inquired, "whether Ned Hyde was of that opinion ?" ‡ In a letter to the queen, who was at

* Life, p. 93.

† Ibid. p. 92—97.

‡ Ibid. p. 99.

that time in Holland, his majesty used a still stronger expression : " I must make Ned Hyde Secretary of State," said he, " for the truth is, I can trust nobody else." This conspicuous testimony to his fidelity cost him very dear ; for the letter was intercepted and published by the parliament, and he now became peculiarly obnoxious, not more to the enemies of the royal cause than to his fellow-courtiers. * These instances of favour did not, however, diminish his confidential intercourse with Falkland and Colepepper ; and if he at any time differed from them, it was chiefly in regard to the affairs of the church. On one occasion, Hyde, without giving his reasons, opposed the publication of a state paper drawn up by Colepepper, and approved both by the king and Falkland ; but withdrew his opposition somewhat indignantly, in consequence of a warm and sharp reproof from the latter. The king, however, became still farther attached to Hyde, when he discovered that his opposition had proceeded from his objection to a statement of Colepepper's, affirming that the King, the Lords, and the Commons, formed the three estates of the kingdom : whereas the king, in his opinion, should have been mentioned as the sovereign of the whole, and the bishops as the third estate. †

* Life, p. 139.

† Ibid. p. 131.

In the fruitless attempts which were made to ^{Commission} bring about a pacification between the king and ^{at Uxbridge.} the parliament, Hyde bore an active part. He was one of the commissioners who attended the negotiations at Uxbridge, and distinguished himself by his opposition to every concession which might have circumscribed the prerogative, or led to innovations in the government of the church. * Much, he thought, at this time, might be done by winning over from the parliament several of the most considerable men, who had indeed deeply offended, but repented of the length to which they had gone, and were desirous to avoid further excesses. But his influence was insufficient to counteract the clamour of the courtiers, and the resentment of the queen ; and he had daily the mortification to see men of rank and power converted into hardened enemies of their sovereign, by having their repentant submissions treated with coldness and contempt. †

During the subsequent struggles, he discovered, ^{Situation during the war.} with unspeakable pain, that the preceding abuses of the royal authority had very generally alienated the people from their allegiance : that they obeyed the ordinances of the parliament, while they disregarded the proclamations of the king : that contributions, large beyond precedent, were readi-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 443.

† Ibid. p. 254, 310.

ly paid to that assembly, while the court was distracted by extreme poverty ; and that the troops of the king were actually reduced to famine, in the same counties where the army of his hostile subjects immediately after found abundant supplies. * He saw a cloud of melancholy presage overhang the countenances of the most virtuous royalists ; and heard, from some, distressing doubts of the justice of the cause in which they were engaged. Sir Edward Varney, a gentleman of unshaken loyalty and distinguished courage, one day complimented him on the cheerfulness and vivacity which he retained amidst the general depression. Hyde began to point out the propriety of every one's maintaining the appearance of hope, where despondency was likely to prove so fatal ; and hinted that to raise the drooping spirits of others was a duty peculiarly incumbent on men of known magnanimity like Varney. The latter replied, with a smile, that he should do his best to fulfil this task : " but my condition," said he, " is much worse than yours, and may well justify the melancholy which, I confess to you, possesses me. You are satisfied in your conscience that you are in the right ; that the king ought not to grant what is required of him ; and so you do your duty and your business together. But, for my part, I like not

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 265.

the quarrel; and do heartily wish that the king would yield and consent to all that is desired. It is only in honour and in gratitude that I am concerned to follow my master. I have eaten his bread, and served him near thirty years, and will not do so base a thing as to forsake him, but rather choose to lose my life, which I am sure I shall do, to defend and preserve those things which it is against my conscience to defend and preserve. For I will deal freely with you: I have no reverence for the bishops, for whom this quarrel subsists." Hyde, though unembarrassed by such doubts, was deeply affected with this conscientious avowal; and still more when he learnt, about two months afterwards, that this faithful and gallant soldier had fallen in the cause of his sovereign. *

As the Chancellor of the Exchequer took no active part in the military operations to which the fate of all parties was now committed, his counsels attracted little notice amidst the noise of war, and the violence of contending factions. He was reduced to the painful task of witnessing disorders which he could not remedy, and calamities which he could not avert. He saw the king, in his deepest distress, cruelly harassed by the importunities of his rapacious and unfeeling courtiers, who did not blush to seize on the day of his calamity to ex-

* Life, p. 134.

tort from him honours which they had not earned, and offices which they could only occupy to his ruin. * He saw a faction of women acquiring an ascendancy in the management of affairs, confounding the wisest counsels by their visionary schemes,

* There is scarcely any circumstance, in perusing the records of that period, which more powerfully excites our indignation, than the unprincipled selfishness which pervaded the immediate servants and dependents of the king. Hyde and Falkland were almost the only attendants on the court, who, in no instance, betrayed a tincture of this abject spirit. Even Sir John Colepepper, after his promotion to the Mastership of the Rolls, endeavoured also to retain the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, and took it very heavily that he was not allowed to engross the emoluments of both offices. (Life, p. 143.) The rapacity of the courtiers of those times, a vice at present comparatively so rare and infamous, may be traced to the peculiar customs of that period. As the revenue of the nation came directly into the hands of the king, and was entirely at his disposal, he might, at his pleasure, either employ it on public purposes, or lavish it on his favourite courtiers; and the latter was frequently its destination. Hence it was a usual practice with men of considerable private fortunes to waste them in adding to the magnificence of the court, and in attracting the notice of the king; in the expectation that the zeal manifested by their profusion would earn far greater riches from his bounty. A great proportion of the courtiers of Charles were persons of this description; and as their habits of dissipation rendered their wants extremely pressing, at a period when the court was in the utmost poverty, their clamorous demands were frequently among the most intolerable embarrassments of the monarch. It was owing to this mode of obtaining favours at court, that menial offices about the person of the monarch were at that period so eagerly sought after; they afforded opportunities of urging requests at a propitious moment. See Hyde's account of Colepepper in the Appendix to this volume, p. viii.

and paralysing the most vigorous plans by their fears. He saw the military officers, on whose good conduct the king now depended for his throne and his life, wasting the season of action in dissipation; incurring irretrievable disasters from a pitiful spirit of faction; insisting on the rejection of all terms of accommodation, from the hope of plundering the rebels; rendering the royal name odious by countenancing the soldiery in depredations on the inhabitants; and finally, on the ruin of their cause, forsaking their standards, and seeking for safety in foreign countries, or, in some cases, in desertion to the enemies of their king.*

But before the affairs of the sovereign were overtaken by this final ruin, Hyde was deprived of his most beloved friend, and the country of its most virtuous royalist, in the premature fall of Lord Falkland. From the commencement of the civil war, and the mutual slaughter of his countrymen, the enlivening gaiety, the unbounded affability, the winning mildness of Falkland,† were converted into a fixed melancholy, an ungracious reserve, a repulsive asperity. He became pale and dejected: his looks and words expressed unconquerable chagrin; and his dress, to which he had formerly been particularly attentive, was now remarkable only for its negligence. One topic alone could rouse him from

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. *passim*.

† Life, p. 45.

his despondency : when any proposition towards peace was brought forward, his countenance brightened, and he zealously pursued the cheering prospect, while any hope could be cherished. As he sat among his friends, he would often, after a deep silence and frequent sighs, reiterate in a piercing accent the word *peace ! peace !* He would then declare, that “ the very agony of the war, and the view of the calamities and desolation which the kingdom endured, deprived him of his sleep, and would shortly break his heart.” These expressions were interpreted into cowardice and disloyalty by the unprincipled soldiers of fortune, who looked forward with eager eyes to the plunder of their opponents ; and Falkland accounted himself bound in honour to refute their calumnies, by being prodigal of a life which the good of his country required him to hold dear. In every action, he stationed himself, as a volunteer, in the foremost ranks, and acted his part with invincible courage : but no sooner did the enemy give way, than he employed his whole efforts to stop the carnage, and seemed to have come into the field merely to save the effusion of blood. In the battle of Edgehill, he incurred imminent danger by these noble acts of humanity. But he was relieved from witnessing the protracted miseries of his country. At the first battle of Newbury, which took place early in the war, he seemed to feel a presage that the

termination of his sorrows was at hand. He adjusted his dress with more care than he had for some time observed, declaring that he did not wish the enemy to find his body in a slovenly condition. "I am weary of the times," added he, "and foresee much misery to my country; but believe that I shall be out of it ere night." As he bore his part in the first onset, he was mortally wounded; and expired, in the thirty-third year of his age, leaving behind him one of the fairest reputations which history can boast. *

After the battle of Naseby, when the affairs of the king began to appear irretrievable even to the most sanguine, Charles resolved to place his eldest son beyond the reach of the parliament, by sending him out of the kingdom. He selected the Lords Capel and Hopton, as the servants in whom he could most confide, and joining with them Hyde and Colepepper, he appointed them to attend the prince as a permanent council, to watch over his safety, and direct all his proceedings. † The charge was delicate, and was soon found to be attended with a number of difficulties. The queen had by this time withdrawn to France, and was particularly desirous that the prince also should repair thither, and be placed under her direction. Such

Of the
Prince of
Wales's
Council.
1644.

* Whitlocke, p. 73, 74. Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 270, 277.
See his character by Hyde in the Appendix, p. ix.

† Life, p. 90.

was her influence over her husband, that, in his first orders to the prince's council, he had commanded them to carry him to France, and place him under his mother's care, without leaving them any discretionary power. * But the council knew that no step could be more prejudicial to the interests either of the king or the prince: that the queen was odious in England, even to the most loyal subjects, from a suspicion that she had instilled into her children the principles of popery: and that indignation would be excited among the best friends of the king, were the prince to be delivered into her hands. There was also reason to distrust the friendly intentions of the French court. Cardinal Mazarine, who now directed its councils, had prevented any effectual assistance from being rendered to Charles, and was supposed to maintain a confidential intercourse with the leaders of the parliament. It was therefore not impossible that he might not, from the views of a crooked policy, become subservient to their designs, and dispose of the prince according to their instructions. But the queen was too intent on the plan of acquiring an uncontrollable ascendancy over the mind of the prince, to be moved by these considerations. And although the council at length procured a discretionary power to convey their charge to Den-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 327.

mark, or to any other foreign country, * they found this permission unavailing against her zealous intrigues.

From Scilly, whither they had at first fled from April 1645, the arms of the parliament, they carried the prince to Jersey, an island distinguished for its loyalty, and well provided with the means of defence. Here he might, in security, and without particular offence to any party, have awaited the course of events in England : but he was immediately assailed by the commands of his mother, to repair without delay to her at Paris. At first the authority of the council, who decidedly opposed his departure, induced him to resist these applications : but at length the love of new scenes triumphed in the breast of a youth, who had only passed his fifteenth year ; and July 1646. he quitted Jersey, attended by only one of his council, Lord Colepepper, who had been won over to the views of the queen.†

Hyde remained in Jersey, and now began, in a Employed on his History. tranquil retreat, to solace himself for the dangers and troubles through which he had passed. In the cheerful society of the governor, Sir George Carteret, and his lady, who received him, with cordial hospitality, into their family, he again enjoyed the pleasures of home : and so happily could his mind dispel uneasy recollections, that, though placed at a

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. II. p. 546, 547. † Ibid. Vol. III. p. 21.

distance from his wife, his children, and his dearest friends, he assures us he ever afterwards recalled, with delight, that interval of peaceful tranquillity. In the castle, he built a suite of apartments for his own use ; and placed over the door an inscription which indicated, that he accounted his part sufficiently discharged in those turbulent times, if he could escape into guiltless obscurity. * Here he pursued the design which he had conceived, of recording to posterity the events of the civil wars : and he speaks, with a pardonable complacence, of the unremitting diligence with which, in the space of two years and some months spent in this retreat, he compiled his voluminous records. †

While his pen was employed in labouring for posterity, he found an opportunity of writing a seasonable reply to a declaration of the parliament. The king, after having in vain tried the loyalty of the Scots and the army, had attempted to escape from his dominions ; but, by the misconduct of those who attended him, was taken prisoner, and confined in the Isle of Wight. Having rejected the propositions which the parliament now sent him, as altogether extravagant, they retaliated by a vote that no more addresses should be made to him. This

* The inscription was, *Bene vixit, qui bene latuit*. He hath lived well, who hath lain well concealed.

† Life, p. 202.

vote they accompanied by a declaration, in which they charged him with having caused all the calamities under which the kingdom suffered, and with having rejected every overture for accommodation. For these reasons, they held themselves justified in discontinuing any further addresses to him, and in proceeding, by their own authority, to provide for the welfare of the kingdom. * To this declaration the Chancellor of the Exchequer published a reply, vigorously retorting the charges of the parliament, and demonstrating the illegality of their present proceedings. The king was much pleased with this vindication; and in particular expressed surprise at the author's profound skill in theological questions. †

From his peaceful retreat in Jersey, Hyde was at length summoned to attend the Prince of Wales, who had now found an opportunity for action. The fleet which had greatly injured the royal cause by an early submission to the parliament, now resolved to atone for their error, by again transferring their services to the king. With this intention, a large squadron sailed for the ports of the United Provinces; and, after taking on board the prince, who had repaired thither to join them, had returned to blockade the Thames. Here,

Joins the
Prince at
the Hague.
April 1648.

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 71.

† Life, p. 204.

amidst the distraction of uncertain counsels, several valuable merchant vessels were successively captured, and released, or ransomed far below their value. * Though the king was then confined in the Isle of Wight, and might, by a vigorous attempt of the fleet, have been rescued, the precious interval was wasted in a blockade of the river, and the parliament was allowed to prepare a naval force. The fruitless enterprise was at length terminated by the hasty retreat of the prince, before a superior force, to the ports of Holland. †

It was on the return from this abortive expedition that the Chancellor of the Exchequer met the Prince of Wales at the Hague; and found himself engaged in a scene of confusion and animosity, which made him look back with fond regret to the tranquil retirement he had been compelled to abandon. The misfortunes of the royalists, instead of softening, had exasperated their minds; and a community in misery seemed to give a new edge to their mutual resentments. Reduced from a licentious prodigality to galling poverty, they grasped, without honour or decency,

* These vessels belonged to the merchants of London, and were restored on easy terms, with a view to conciliate the citizens; a policy which proved ineffectual, and is much condemned by Clarendon, who thinks that none but severe remedies ought to have been applied to their distempered minds.

† Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 121, 124.

at the scanty resources which the cold generosity of foreign princes bestowed on their master : and we are tempted by turns to ridicule and to lament the furious contests for power and pre-eminence, which agitated this handful of exiled courtiers. To such a degree had private passions absorbed every other consideration in the breasts of these unfortunate men, that some of them had even laboured to excite a mutiny in the fleet with a view to oppress their rivals ; and overlooked the danger of shaking the allegiance of the sailors in their ardour to prevent their being led by their antagonists. *

As the Chancellor had borne no part in these intrigues, his arrival was welcomed by all parties ; and he was soon beset by the contending courtiers, who endeavoured to draw him to their faction, by bitter invectives against their opponents. † He beheld, with extreme concern, these dissensions, so indecent amidst public calamities, and so ruinous to the royal cause : he exerted all his powers of conciliation to allay them : yet could he scarcely prevent Prince Rupert and Lord Colepepper from terminating, by a personal fray, the insults which they offered to each other in the presence of the Prince of Wales and the Council. ‡ The news of

Jan. 30,
1649.

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 107. † Ib. p. 128. ‡ Ib. p. 149.

the king's death for a time diffused universal melancholy and consternation ; yet, in a few weeks, the animosities of the courtiers reassumed their former virulence, and distracted the councils of their new sovereign. " I find," exclaims Hyde on this occasion, " that no desolation upon the public, no lowness of the court, will lessen our particular ambitions, or private designs." *

Hated by
the queen.

Amidst a society so misled by private passions, a man of moderation and disinterested zeal, like Hyde, could not long prove acceptable ; and he soon found himself aspersed by the calumnies of those who were unable to render him subservient to their factious purposes. Above all, he was pursued with animosity by the adherents of the queen, who was his avowed foe. That ambitious princess had learned to regard as her private enemy every minister who pretended to any independent favour with her husband ; and Hyde, who had acquired the confidence of his sovereign, by means more honourable than enlisting himself among her creatures, had become, in her eyes, not less odious than Laud or Strafford. From his attachment to the church of England and to moderate measures, his councils had often differed from those of her majesty ; and she had hence been led to charge to his account

* Letter to Lord Jermyn, in Clarendon's State Papers, Vol. II. p. 473.

every resolution which corresponded not with her desires. When he was appointed of the prince's council, she began to dread that he would undermine her ascendancy over her son, as she imagined he had her influence with her husband ; and his strenuous opposition to the departure of the prince from Jersey to France confirmed all these impressions. Her ambition, however, was not guided by discretion ; and the means which she employed to secure her sway over her son effectually counteracted her intentions. Instead of settling on him separate appointments, the court of France had merely increased the allowance of his mother ; and, having him thus wholly in her power, she took care to make him feel his absolute dependence, by dealing her bounty with so sparing a hand, that he had never, at one time, ten pistoles at his disposal.* Yet was she surprised to find that his affections daily became more estranged from her ; and when Hyde afterwards joined him at the Hague, she failed not to ascribe to his intrigues an alienation which naturally flowed from her own ill-liberality. So eager was she to govern the mind of the prince, that, in her first letters to him after her husband's death, she could not, though overcome with the melancholy intelligence, forbear in-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 88.

roducing an injunction that he should swear in no members of his council till he had first consulted her. * And when she found this injunction disregarded, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer among the first of the new sovereign's counsellors, she here discovered fresh proofs of his hostility to her influence.

Ambassador
to Spain.

From the inheritance of a throne, Charles had not even derived a roof to shelter his head : and the first councils of the new monarch were occupied in deliberating what quarter of Europe might best afford him subsistence and refuge. His removal from Holland became indispensable, in consequence of the increasing connections of that country with the revolutionary government of England. Some prospect was opened for active enterprise in Ireland ; but the assistance of France was necessary for its successful prosecution, and the prince was to repair to Paris before proceeding on the attempt. In this state of things, Hyde looked forward to his future attendance with uneasiness. His constitution, enfeebled by former hardships, and by premature paroxysms of the gout, was ill prepared to sustain the vicissitudes of hasty journeys and uncertain voyages : his habits were altogether unsuited to the active enterprises of war :

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 216.

and to remain in France, exposed to the hatred of the queen, and the insults of her dependents, was the most gloomy of alternatives. He, therefore, willingly hearkened to the suggestions of his friend and colleague, Lord Cottington, that they should procure for themselves a mission into Spain, for the purpose of soliciting the assistance of that monarchy. Their request was readily complied with by Charles; but their motives were severely scrutinized by the other courtiers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was reproached with being more concerned for his ease than the discharge of his duty; with deserting his prince, at the season of greatest danger; and with abandoning his youth and indiscretion to the guidance of the selfish and the vicious.* But Hyde was weary of the society into which he had fallen; and equally dispirited by the state of the royal cause, and the perpetual contentions of the needy men by whom he was surrounded. † “He did believe,” as he informs us, “that he should in some degree improve his understanding, and very much refresh his spirits, by what he should learn, and by his absence from being continually conversant with those wants, which could never be severed from that court, and

* Life, p. 218.

† Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 238.

that company which would be always corrupted by those wants." *

Reception
there.
1649.

The reception which the ambassadors found in Spain was such as the servants of exiled princes usually experience. Their business, solicitation for supplies, was unwelcome to an embarrassed government: and, if they could present no cogent motives of hope or fear, they had little reason to expect that interest would be sacrificed to a romantic generosity. On arriving, as the fortunes of their master were accounted desperate, and the favour of the parliament eagerly courted by the rival governments of France and Spain, they were allowed to enter Madrid, unacknowledged and unnoticed. No house was prepared for their reception as ambassadors, nor any outward tokens of respect vouchsafed them. When at length their importunities and a regard to decency procured them an audience, they were amused with general professions of friendship, the sincerity of which they were left to estimate from the coldness and neglect which they daily experienced. The appearance of Prince Rupert on the coasts of Spain, with the royal fleet, produced a sudden and wonderful change: the ambassadors were received at court with open arms, all their requests answered with

* Life, p. 219.

magnificent promises, and their doors honoured by the most illustrious visitors. * So long as Prince Rupert was an object of terror, the Spaniards seemed entirely at their devotion ; but the arrival of a superior fleet, in the service of the parliament, quickly altered the face of affairs, and the ambassadors again found themselves consigned to neglect. † The accounts that the Scots had declared for Charles, and placed him at the head of a powerful army, renewed the smiles of the Spanish courtiers : but when reports arrived that the prince had been irretrievably defeated, the ambassadors received very distinct intimations that their absence would be agreeable. ‡

Unwilling to abandon the hope of succour, and uncertain whither to go, the ambassadors resolved not to understand these ungracious hints : but no room was left for a dubious interpretation, when the Secretary of State, one morning, repairing unexpectedly to their residence, delivered them an express command from the king, that they should quit the Spanish dominions without delay. If they were moved at this extraordinary rudeness, and the hardship imposed on them at so inclement a season of the year, (it was then towards the end 1651.

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 262.

† Ibid. p. 263.

‡ Ibid. p. 295.

of January;) their indignation was not lessened on discovering the immediate cause of this royal message. A large assortment of valuable pictures and rich furniture, which the Spanish envoy at London had purchased at the sale of the king's property, had just arrived in port; and it appeared indecorous to convey them to the palace, before the eyes of the English ambassadors. * Lord Cottington, who had now attained his seventy-sixth year, was weary of wanderings to which he saw no end; and having formerly lived much in Spain, and embraced the Catholic religion, he returned to the bosom of that church, and obtained permission to pass the remainder of his days in private at Valladolid. † Hyde was dismissed with tolerable civility; but could carry with him no impressions favourable to the generosity of the Spaniards, who had not only neglected him in his public capacity, but had seen him reduced to an indigence almost incredible. ‡

On quitting Spain, it was some time before

Condemns
the treaty
with the
Scots.

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 295.

† Ibid. p. 297. See Appendix, p. xi. for Hyde's account of Lord Cottington.

‡ At one period of his embassy, he writes to a friend: "I never felt the like want I have done these three weeks, since I was born; and if I had a pistole to dispose of in that time I am no honest man." State Papers, Vol. III. p. 21.

Hyde could discover the retreat of his fugitive prince, who, after witnessing the ruin of all his hopes at the battle of Worcester, had disappeared from his affrighted adherents. * After wandering, unattended and disguised, through various parts of England, he at length escaped to the Continent, and reaped no other fruit from his dangers and hardships, but an aggravation of his misfortunes. This rash enterprise served only to confirm the power and reputation of Cromwell, and was severely censured by Hyde. He placed little reliance on either the fidelity or the strength of the Scots; but the taking of the covenant by Charles, the price of the Scottish assistance, he looked on as an act so profligate and impious, that no consequences could be expected from it but defeat and disgrace. He knew that the young king neither intended to perform what he promised, nor believed that to

* The Scots, perceiving that Cromwell and the independents were no less enemies to their covenant than the court had been, resolved to espouse the royal cause, and invited Charles to put himself at the head of their forces. They, however, took the precaution of entering into certain stipulations with him, both for religious and civil privileges; and, in particular, they required him to take the covenant, a step to which he was also urged by the queen, who thought such arts very allowable for the recovery of a throne. But the Scots were unequal antagonists to Cromwell. After experiencing one defeat, they indeed levied another army, with which Charles, leaving the enemy behind him, suddenly marched into England; but was overtaken at Worcester by Cromwell, and totally routed.

which he solemnly swore ; and he was of opinion that no worldly consideration could justify such a flagrant violation of conscience. “ It is now to no purpose,” writes he on this occasion, “ to talk more of that sad argument, which can be justified by no human reason, let the success be what it will : we must only rely on God Almighty, who will in the end bring light out of this darkness ; and, I am confident, they who shall, in spite of all evil examples, continue honest and steady to their good principles, what distresses soever they may for a time suffer, will in the end find happiness even in this world ; and that all your dexterous compliers will be exposed to the infamy they deserve.” *

Harassed by
calumnies.

In expectation, therefore, of brighter days, he resolved to follow the fortune of his sovereign, however discouraging, and to retain his integrity as the unfailing anchor of his hopes. At Paris, where he now joined the king, he undertook, in the absence of his friend Sir Edward Nicholas, †

* Hyde to Secretary Nicholas, State Papers, Vol. III. p. 22.

† Sir Edward Nicholas had been secretary of state during the whole of the civil commotions, and had discharged his duty with disinterested fidelity. He was the bosom friend of Hyde, and rendered him some essential services, by affording pecuniary relief to his family during their exile. Nicholas was now in Holland, watching the course of events, and availing himself of any occasion to promote the interests of his master. The correspondence which, at this

to act as principal secretary of state ; and soon found himself involved in the cabals and dissensions from which he had gladly escaped. The followers of the king were divided between the favourers of the Presbyterian and of the Popish factions ; and Hyde, who resolutely maintained his attachment to the Church of England, was equally disliked by both. * The queen, who had now lost all influence over the mind of her son, was exasperated to see that confidence, to which she in vain aspired, cordially reposed in the chancellor of the exchequer : and to such an extremity did she and her partisans carry their animosity, that they were willing to do any mischief to the cause, provided they could render the services of his minister unsuccessful. † The most bitter calumnies were circulated against the chancellor : he was even stigmatised as a traitor ; and a report was confidentially divulged, that he had been in England, and entered into an intrigue with Cromwell. ‡ These incessant efforts of malice preyed on his quiet ; and, in his letters to his confidential friend, Secretary Nicholas, we often find him lamenting this cruel aggravation of his misfortunes. “ The vex-

period, passed between him and Hyde, has fortunately been preserved ; and it is from hence we derive the most interesting particulars concerning the exiles.

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 138.

† Ibid. p. 164.

‡ Ibid. p. 206.

tions I undergo, by what I see and hear daily, and the insupportable weight of envy and malice I groan under, when I behave myself, (God knows,) with as much care as if I were to die the next minute, does make my life so unpleasant to me, and breaks my mind, that bread and water in any corner of the world would give me all the joy imaginable." * "Oh!" he exclaims, "to be quiet and starve is no unpleasant condition to what I endure." † He often looked back, with an eye of regret, to his tranquil retreat in Jersey, and envied the lot of those who might quietly enjoy their studies and poverty. "I wish," says he, "that I were at my books in any part of the world; for I am not made for these conflicts." ‡ He was often tormented with the gout, and worn out by the pressure of business. Occasionally he expresses to his friend an apprehension that he should sink under his difficulties: "yet," he adds, "I am persuaded if I might be quiet and left to my books, I should outlive this storm; whereas this condition I am in breaks my mind and wastes my spirits so much, that I cannot hold out long." §

Favoured
by Charles.

The animosity of the queen towards him became so avowed, that he found it necessary at length to avoid her presence; and though they

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 169.

† Ibid. p. 63.

‡ Ibid. p. 211.

§ Ibid. p. 216.

both lodged in the same palace at Paris, he did not once see her in the course of many months. Two formal petitions were prepared, the one in the name of all the presbyterian loyalists, the other as the desire of all his majesty's popish subjects, praying that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be removed from his councils and his presence, as a person whom all his friends regarded as their enemy. * Such intrigues, however, made no impression on Charles, who saw through their malice; and continued to place unlimited confidence in Hyde. That prince had considerable penetration, and easily distinguished the disinterested zeal of the Chancellor, from the selfish motives of others. Besides, even in this his day of penury, Charles was immoderately addicted to pleasure: and neither the pressure of difficulties, nor the hopes of recovering a crown, could induce him to bestow a reasonable attention on his affairs. While his minister was so continually engaged in carrying on the correspondence with the loyalists in every part of Europe, that he had scarcely leisure for the necessary refreshment of his body, Charles could prevail on himself to write letters only on Friday; and, when that day happened to be occupied by some other engagement, which was often the case, the most essential dispatches were defer-

* Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 398.

red for another week.* From these dissolute habits, his ministers began to apprehend the worst consequences; † and the faithful Marquis of Ormond, who had succeeded Falkland in the friendship and esteem of Hyde, lamented that his dissipation contributed more to the ruin of his cause, than all the strength of his enemies. “I fear,” writes the Marquis, “his immoderate delight in empty and vulgar conversations is become an irresistible part of his nature, and will never suffer him to animate his own designs, or the actions of others, with that spirit which is requisite to his quality, and much more to his fortune.” ‡ To a prince so engrossed by the love of pleasure, no treasure could be more valuable than a minister on whose fidelity he could implicitly rely, and whose industry would repair the evils of his own neglect. No arts, therefore, could induce Charles to withdraw his countenance from Hyde. He even heard his remonstrances without displeasure; and was willing to be admonished, provided he was relieved from labour.

Extreme
poverty.

As the period of exile was protracted, the necessities of Charles and his followers increased: they received little alleviation from his brother monarchs, who seem never to have been led, by so striking

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 159.

† Hyde to Nicholas, *ibid.* p. 173.

‡ Ormond to Hyde, State Papers, Vol. III. p. 387.

an example, to reflect on the strange vicissitudes of human affairs. By dint of importunity, his agents had drawn from the princes of Germany some promises of pecuniary contributions; but of these, the few which were paid could seldom be recovered from the grasp of the agents employed to receive them. The royal family of France, though so nearly connected with the exiled prince by the ties of kindred, contributed very little to his relief. At one time, Charles flattered himself with deriving a more independent relief from the exertions of his fleet, which had made several rich prizes from the West India trade of England: but when he came to inquire after his share of the booty, he had the mortification to receive from his cousin Prince Rupert, the admiral, a statement of expence, which made Charles appear much in debt by the operations from which he expected supplies. *

Hyde sustained his full share of the general indignance; for he could neither intercept the scanty

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 224. Hyde apprehended that there was something worse than want of generosity in the conduct of Prince Rupert on this occasion. "The Prince Rupert," says he, "hath, in a little short paper, not containing twenty lines, given the king an account, by which he makes the king in debt to him, so senselessly and ridiculously as cannot be imagined; and this is a secret, for he desires it may not be seen, nor does he imagine that I have seen it."

supplies of his necessitous master, nor submit to any device inconsistent with his character. In his dispatches to his friend Sir Edward Nicholas, we find him frequently complaining of his urgent wants. "I am so cold," says he, "that I am scarce able to hold my pen, and have not three sous in the world to buy a faggot." * Again, "It is now mid-winter, and I have neither clothes nor fire to preserve me from the severity of the season." † He had been obliged to incur such debts for the mere necessities of life, that he began to look with apprehension to the gloom of a prison; ‡ and he could no longer procure a dress sufficient either for comfort or appearance. "I want shoes and shirts," says he, "and the Marquis of Ormond is in no better condition." § Those men, who had so lately lived in affluence and splendour, were now taught to devise the most frugal expedients for subsistence. They procured a maintenance at the most moderate rate, by messing together at an obscure eating-house; and, after their pockets were fairly emptied even by this economical arrangement, they had sufficient credit with their landlady to live for some time on trust. At this period, Hyde assures us he scarcely knew one of the king's servants who had a single pistole

* Hyde to Nicholas, State Papers, Vol. III. p. 126.

† Ibid. p. 112.

‡ Ibid. p. 164.

§ Ibid. p. 229.

in his pocket. "I have not," he says, "been master of a crown these many months; I am cold for want of clothes and fire, and owe for all the meat which I have eaten these three months, and to a poor woman who is no longer able to trust; and my poor family at Antwerp (which breaks my heart) is in as sad a state as I am; and the king as either of us." *

Notwithstanding this severe pressure, Hyde still ^{Persevering integrity.} maintained the same erect aspect; and turned with disdain from every proposal which might have compromised his integrity. Some of the king's followers embraced the Catholic religion, and entered into the service of France and Spain: a still greater proportion returned to England, and, by certain compliances with the existing government, were allowed to regain their estates on paying a composition. Both these courses were strenuously reprobated by Hyde; and when urged to allow at least some friend to compound for his estates in his behalf, he declared that no necessity should induce him to acknowledge a government which, in his

* Hyde to Nicholas, State Papers, Vol. III. p. 124. The wretchedness to which some of the king's faithful followers were reduced almost exceeds belief. Hyde thus writes to Nicholas: "Poor Dick Harding is again fallen into a new pit. Upon my credit, he hath pawned every little thing he hath; the cup which the prince gave him, and every spoon, and hath not a shirt to his back." *Ib.* p. 352.

heart, he considered a usurpation. Through all these difficulties, his courage was supported by the fortitude of his wife, who sustained the sad reverse of her fortune with singular magnanimity. She remained in England until it was no longer safe : she then retired with her family to Antwerp, and there endeavoured, by the arts of frugality, to avoid the sordid aspect of penury. Hyde acknowledges that, on this side alone, he trembled for his constancy ; and that, if his wife had been unequal to her distresses, the conflict would have been severe between his honour and his softer feelings. He dwells on the “ unspeakable comfort which he derived from her miraculous courage ;” and declares that it was his chief consolation amidst all his difficulties. *

While his own misfortunes were at the height, he continually strove to animate the resolution of others ; the exhortations which he employed gave an exalted idea of his virtue and piety. “ Keep up your spirits,” writes he to Secretary Nicholas, “ and take heed of sinking under a burden, which you never kneeled to take up. Our innocence begets our cheerfulness, and that again will be a means to secure the other. Whoever grows too weary and impatient of the condition he is in, will too impatiently project to get out of it ; and that,

* State Papers, Vol. II. p. 310.

by degrees, will shake, or baffle, or delude his innocence. We have no reason to blush for the poverty which is not brought on us by our own faults. As long as it pleases God to give me health, (which, I thank him, I have in a good measure,) I shall think he intends that I shall outlive all these sufferings; and when he sends sickness, I shall (I hope with the same submission) believe that he intends to remove me from greater calamities." *

After residing for some time at Paris in extreme indigence, Charles at length found that he could not expect even an asylum from the French court. It was then governed by a calculating Italian, and seemed actuated by very selfish motives. Even before Charles quitted Jersey, his council was apprized that this ungenerous court had planned, in concurrence with the partisans of the queen, to render him tributary to France, as the price of its aid in his restoration; and, in particular, to sever from England the islands of Jersey and Guernsey.† The increasing power of the revolutionary government rendered these designs abortive; yet, during the whole course of his exile, Charles received no better indications of friendship or honour. "The cheats," says Hyde, "and the villany of that na-

* State Papers, Vol. II. p. 310.

† Ibid. p. 276, 279.

tion, are so gross, that I cannot think of it with patience ; nor will the king ever prosper till he abhors them perfectly, and trusts none who trusts them." * The full establishment of Cromwell's power put an end to all disguises : and Mazarine, partly in prosecution of his design to humble the Spaniards, partly from a dread of the Protector's power, gladly embraced a strict alliance with England. From complaisance to his new ally, he hastened to withdraw his protection from the exiles ; and Charles, with his few adherents, was again compelled to wander in quest of an abode. †

The wars in which the Dutch, and afterwards the Spaniards, engaged with Cromwell, seemed to offer some prospect of relief to the royal cause. But the vigour of the Protector was not to be shaken : and neither of these powers showed an inclination to embarrass their negotiations by conditions for the exiled prince. The enterprises of

* State Papers, Vol. II. p. 242.

† The equipage in which Charles set out from Paris, on this occasion, gives a striking idea of the penury to which he was reduced. His coach-horses, which still remained to him, he put to a waggon containing his bed and clothes. He himself performed the journey on horseback ; nor was he owner of a coach for some years afterwards. From this time he resided chiefly at Cologne, Brussels, and other towns in the Low Countries. At all of them he was obliged to contract debts, and to endure the continual importunities of his creditors. He was often forced to put off the most necessary journeys, from the want of money to bear his travelling expences. See Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 411, &c.

foreign armies, or domestic conspirators, seemed equally hopeless during the sway of this energetic usurper; and the termination of his life began to be regarded by the royalists as so essential to their cause, that no means appeared nefarious which could effect that object. It is not to be concealed that even Hyde encouraged the attempts of Captain Titus and others to remove Cromwell by assassination.* To such a degree do men reconcile themselves to the worst means, when they are eagerly bent on the end, that even this conscientious minister, in his devotion to the rights of the king, forgot what was due to the rights of human nature.

The rapid decay of a constitution exhausted by incessant fatigue and agitation, unexpectedly accomplished what the hand of the assassin had attempted in vain; and the death of Cromwell again awakened all the hopes of the royalists. The event, however, was not immediately followed by favourable occurrences. The power and title of the Protector passed into the hands of his son with the same facility as if the inheritance had been a legitimate transmission. The court of France testified its sorrow for the loss of its ally, by appearing in mourning; † and no state which courted the fa-

1658.
Death of
Cromwell.

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 321, 331, 337, 384. See in Appendix, p. xii. the character of Cromwell by Hyde.

† Ibid. p. 418.

1659.

vour, or dreaded the resentment of England, delayed to congratulate the new Protector on his accession. But the aspect of affairs soon underwent a change. The sceptre was easily wrested from the feeble hands of Richard Cromwell by ambitious chiefs; and the government was again involved in revolutions of which no one could discover the termination.

Even in his most desperate fortunes, Hyde looked with aversion on the project of reducing his rebellious countrymen by foreign arms: * and he never failed to cherish a hope that Providence, by some unforeseen and extraordinary means, would finally give a triumph to the righteous cause. † That happy event appeared at length to be approaching when men began to look on the restoration of the ancient government as the only means of avoiding bloodshed and anarchy.

State of
England.

Nothing could exceed the confusion of political ideas which then prevailed in England. The leaders of the people had comprehended the tendency of the measures of Charles the First, and perceived that unless the privileges of parliament were strictly guarded, the liberties of the nation were at end. But when they proceeded to renounce monarchy entirely, and to frame a new constitution, they showed themselves utterly unacquainted with

* State Papers, Vol. II. p. 307, 329.

† Ibid. p. 329.

the essential principles of government ; and discovered no better security for the freedom of the people, than to substitute the tyranny of many for the tyranny of one. The parliament, which had now usurped all power, quickly found itself at the mercy of the army, and the misguided struggles for liberty terminated in the most lawless of all dominions, a military despotism. When the death of Cromwell, and the deposition of his son, enabled the active spirits to resume the business of framing constitutions, they showed that their political sagacity had received little improvement. They had very little idea of that distribution of power, by which the authority of rulers is rendered at once effectual and innoxious ; their crude discussions turned on the eligibility of vesting the supreme power in one man, in a few, or in the people at large ; and men seemed ready to lose their lives for the theoretical governments, which were either pernicious or impracticable.

The distraction of political opinions was increased by their association with religious chimeras. At the commencement of the civil commotions, the controversies between the churchmen and the puritan dissenters were of little importance : they were confined chiefly to the ceremonial of worship ; for the Arminian doctrines, though countenanced by the bishops, had by no means been adopted into the creed of the church. When the civil disputes

grew high, the decided part which the prelates took in support of the court rendered them odious to the advocates of freedom ; and gave popularity to a presbyterian form of church-government, where all the ministers of religion should be placed on a footing of equality. But the presbyterian leaders showed themselves no less attached to particular institutions than the followers of episcopacy. All the change which they desired was the legal establishment of their own modes of worship and church-government ; and Whitgift or Laud had not been more decided enemies than them to general toleration. In civil affairs, they would have been content to restore the king to his throne, but under limitations which his episcopal followers deemed incompatible with monarchy. Tenets of this nature were unacceptable to two very efficient classes in the nation ; to those who desired full liberty of conscience, and to those who aimed at a total alteration of the constitution. A new sect of religionists, therefore, arose, who proclaimed their superior liberality, by assuming the name of independents. Renouncing all church establishments, all forms and human creeds, they affected to have no other teacher than the Spirit of God. They denied to no one that perfect freedom of conscience which they claimed for themselves ; and the most ignorant mechanics and common soldiers, by the force of inspiration, became popular teachers of

theology. Such were the tenets embraced by the army, who first put their king to death as a tyrant, and afterwards invested their leader with the power of a despot. The political opinions of the independents were no less various and incoherent. One party, the levellers, aimed at nothing less than to equalize all men in authority. A peculiar sect, the fifth-monarchy-men, believed that the millennium was at hand ; and that Christ, with his saints, (among whom they failed not to include themselves,) was about to assume the government of empires. All these extravagancies disgusted the reflecting part of the nation, and made them long for the restoration of the ancient constitution, however rudely adjusted by time and accident.

A considerable interval, however, was passed in uncertainty. The Rump Parliament, finding the seat of government unoccupied, resumed its former station ; but, on growing imperious, was again displaced by the army. A grand council of officers now held the supreme direction of affairs, but seemed uncertain how to employ their authority : the city of London acknowledged only its own magistrates ; and the three armies stationed respectively in England, Scotland, and Ireland, appeared resolved to dispute the sovereignty. Yet amidst all this confusion, the affairs of private life proceeded in their usual channel. Men heard of the successive changes as if they were nowise con-

turned; and the royalists began to apprehend that the minds of the people, reconciled by habit to this state of things, would cease to desire a more stable government. *

General
Monk.

The loyalty or the selfishness of an individual first opened the way to the restoration. General Monk had distinguished himself as an officer in the king's army; and having been taken prisoner by the forces of the parliament, was confined in the Tower till the subjugation of the royalists. At length the temptation of his liberty and a superior command induced him to enter into the service of Cromwell: and so well did he prove his fidelity to the Protector, that he was received into his entire confidence, and appointed commander-in-chief of the forces in Scotland. When the remains of the Long Parliament had regained their authority, he submitted to it, with every expression of duty; and when the army in London, under the command of his rival, Lambert, dissolved that assembly, he declared loudly against this violence, and marched into England to avenge the quarrel. Lambert hastened northwards to meet him: but his army mouldered away without a blow, and he was himself compelled to surrender as a prisoner. Monk continued his march towards London; and drew on himself the eyes of all men, as the irresistible arbi-

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 585.

ter of the future government. His behaviour was calculated to cherish hopes in every party. He privately listened to the overtures of the king's agents : he received, with obliging expressions, the numerous addresses for a free parliament,* which were presented to him on his march : and, in his open declarations, he gave the most solemn assurances of fidelity to the existing parliament, and of his devoted attachment to republicanism.† He wished that his right hand might drop off, if it was not employed to resist every attempt of the king's partisans ; ‡ and, in a letter to Sir Arthur Hasle-
rig, a principal leader of the parliament, he renewed his vows in terms, which could not be distrusted, if any confidence was to be placed in protestations : " As for a commonwealth," said he, " believe me, Sir, for I speak it in the presence of God, it is the desire of my soul, and shall, the Lord assisting, be witnessed by the actions of my life, that these nations be so settled in a free state, without a king, single person, or house of peers, that

* The Rump Parliament, for whom Monk now declared, comprehended only the members of the independent party, who had, for some time, been allowed to retain their authority, after Cromwell had excluded the presbyterians and the rest of the opposition. By the demand for a *free parliament*, some intended the restoration of these excluded members to their seats, and others the election of new representatives.

† State Papers, Vol. III. p. 629, 632, 661. ‡ Ibid. p. 703.

they may be governed by their representatives in parliament successively," *

When he appeared before the parliament, his language continued to breathe a devoted attachment to them, and bitter invectives against monarchy : † and when they commanded him to march from Westminster into the city, and chastise the insolence of the refractory citizens, who harassed them with importunities for a free parliament, he promptly executed the orders, demolished their gates and other defences, committed many to the Tower, and aggravated his severity by every expression of contempt. ‡ But on the very day that he had reduced the royalists to despair, by thus enforcing the authority of the parliament, he found that this assembly was engaged in private consultations to deprive him of his power, and to associate others with him in the command of the army. On the following day, therefore, he wrote a severe letter to the House, reproaching them with their misconduct, and requiring them immediately to summon a free parliament. He then marched again into the city ; summoned the mayor, aldermen, and common-council, to Guildhall ; apologised for the transactions of the preceding day ; assured them that he would unite his endeavours to theirs,

* Letter from Monk to Haslerig, *ibid.* p. 678.

† State Papers, p. 688.

‡ Hist. of Reb. Vol. III. p. 557.

to procure a free parliament, and compose the distractions of the kingdom.* These declarations were received by the astonished citizens with transport; and as the former evening had closed in consternation and dismal forebodings, the present was prolonged by bonfires and every demonstration of joy. By the direction of Monk, the members formerly expelled from the House of Commons by Cromwell were re-admitted to their seats; and now forming a majority in that assembly, proceeded to issue writs for a new parliament, and then voted their own dissolution. The elections were carried decidedly in favour of the royalists; and Monk, who had now entered into direct negotiations with the king, was no less successful in preparing the army for his reception. The first overtures of Charles to the new representatives were received with transport, and his return demanded with enthusiasm.† Monk and the other leaders were too intent on atoning for their past offences, and in conciliating the favour of their new monarch, to embarrass him with any stipulations for the liberties of the people: and Charles ascended the throne of his father, without any restriction on those pretensions which had caused so many years of confusion and bloodshed.‡

1660.

Restoration
of the king.

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 692.

† Ibid. p. 736.

‡ There are few points in the English history which have been more keenly controverted than the views and character of Monk.

Hyde created Lord Chancellor.

During these transactions, Hyde, who, in the meantime, had been created Lord Chancellor, was

The friends of royalty have been unwilling to allow that the man, who acted so meritorious a part in the restoration of the king, could be stained with any vices. It is, however, difficult to reconcile his conduct to any rules of morality. The successive transference of his allegiance from the king to Cromwell, from the son of Cromwell to the Rump Parliament, and again from the Rump Parliament to the king, can be excused by those only who look on interest as the standard of truth and honour. If, as some allege, he was, in his heart, always loyal to the king, and only waited an opportunity to serve him with effect, we free him from the charge of unprincipled versatility, by subjecting him to the imputation of gross hypocrisy. No prospect of private or public good can excuse wilful and deliberate perjury. Clarendon considered him as acting on no settled plan; but thinks that he changed his views as his interest seemed to be affected by successive occurrences. During his march to London, the Chancellor had great distrust of his intentions; and feared that the honours and emoluments showered on him by the parliament would "work very far on his ambitious and avaricious nature." (*State Papers*, Vol. III. p. 679.) Even in his *History of the Rebellion*, after he had more minutely weighed the transactions of the general, Clarendon seems to have entertained an opinion, that, if the parliament had acted with proper discretion towards Monk, "they might have found a full condescension from him, at least no opposition to all their other counsels:" and that "the disposition, which finally grew in him towards the royal cause, did arise from divers accidents, which fell out in the course of affairs, and seemed even to oblige him to undertake that which in the end conduced so much to his greatness and glory." (*Hist. of Reb.* Vol. III. p. 548, 558.) It is certain that Monk could not, without extreme hazard, have then attempted to act the part of Cromwell; and that he could not gratify selfish passions so fully by establishing a free republic, or a strictly limited monarchy, as by restoring the king without any conditions.

busily employed in managing the secret correspondence with the royalists, and in directing their private negotiations with Monk and the other leaders. When the restoration of the monarchy became no longer doubtful, his great apprehension was, that conditions would be imposed on the king : and, in that event, he had reason to dread stipulations in favour of the Presbyterian discipline, to which he felt an unconquerable aversion. He, therefore, pressed " that all should be settled on the old foundation ;" and the king unconditionally restored to his inheritance. * He was, indeed, personally interested in preserving the freedom of his master : for he had received information, that, if the Parliament made conditions with the king, an express stipulation would be inserted for his exclusion from the royal councils. † The arts of his opponents were, however, ineffectual : he had his full share in the triumph of his cause ; and his tried fidelity, and protracted sufferings, were rewarded by the station of Lord Chancellor and principal minister of England.

If, in the days of poverty and danger, Charles Principal Minister. had eagerly fled from business and reflection to any pleasure which occasion offered ; we are not to wonder that he willingly delivered himself up to those unbounded festivities which now occupied

* State Papers, Vol. III. p. 710. † Ibid. p. 728.

the court and the nation. In these festivities, the royalists seemed desirous to forget their sufferings, the republicans to bury their demerits. The Chancellor alone had habits of business and temperance too confirmed to be shaken by the surrounding contagion ; and it was with general approbation that Charles gave him a complete control over public affairs. * The task of reducing to order the confusion engendered during so many years, of undergoing endless importunities for pardon, for reward, and for favour, was, indeed, scarcely an object of envy. The principal offices of state were distributed among persons whom he wholly approved : the Marquis of Ormond was created Lord Steward of the Household ; Sir Edward Nicholas continued principal Secretary of State ; and the Earl of Southampton, a man whom kindred virtues endeared to the Chancellor, was placed at the head of the Treasury. With these colleagues, Hyde, who was soon afterwards known as Earl of Clarendon, maintained the most unreserved and confidential intercourse ; profiting, on every important occasion, by their advice, and supporting his measures by their authority.

Public measures ; act of indemnity.

The first and most urgent care of government was to moderate those agitations of hope and fears which, amidst the appearance of universal joy, se-

* Continuation of Clarendon's Life, p. 43.

cretly prevailed in the bosoms of the people. Those who had been injured in their persons, and despoiled of their property, for their attachment to the royal cause, now looked for reparation and revenge ; while those who had borne an active part in the revolution, and shared in its spoils, beheld, with terror, the rod of power transferred to their enemies. As the first tumults of joy subsided, the animosities of party became daily more apparent : and until some effectual remedy should be applied, it was impossible either to subdue the disorder or to rest in security from new commotions. Charles, before returning, had given solemn assurances that, with the exception of those who had actually sat in judgment on his father, no one should suffer for acts of disloyalty. In conformity to this promise, which it was equally wise to make, and politic to preserve inviolate, Clarendon prepared an act of indemnity and oblivion, which, by effacing, with a few exceptions, the transgressions of former times, should consign to final rest the jealousies of the public. In the convention parliament, which invited the return of the king, and included a large proportion of repentant revolutionists, this act was readily passed ; but, in the succeeding parliament, the sanction of which was accounted requisite for the validity of all acts passed by the convention, the bill of indemnity met with strenuous opposition from the numerous royalists who were now return-

ed as representatives. The influence of Clarendon and the other ministers seemed scarcely sufficient to overpower the refractory humour of the two houses; and it was not until after the repeated and personal instances of the king, who saw that he could expect neither ease nor security if the royalists were let loose on their former enemies, that the act was at length reluctantly passed.*

The salutary effects of this measure were evinced by the evils resulting from even the few exceptions that were made. The judges of the king ascended the scaffold with the same intrepidity as their royal victim; and their last words were employed in exhorting the people not to despair of a cause for which they gloried to perish. Such scenes never fail to make a deep impression on the multitude, who are not aware how usual it is for men to encounter death with resolution, amidst a crowd of admiring spectators. The death both of the king and of the regicides, by attracting general sympathy and admiration, alternately procured many proselytes to their respective causes. A still worse effect was produced on the minds of the people by the execution of Sir Harry Vane, who, far from being one of the king's judges, had openly disapproved his condemnation; and whose death

* Continuation, p. 133. Burnet's History of his own Times, Vol. I. p. 240.

was the consequence partly of imprudent language, partly of the hatred of the royalists, for his share in the attainder of Strafford. On the approach of his fate, Vane seemed to triumph over all fears, from a confidence in the justice of his cause. To prevent the effects of his dying eloquence, which his opponents exceedingly apprehended, drummers were stationed around the scaffold; who, with their instruments, drowned his voice, as soon as he began to address the people. Vane, nowise disconcerted, desired they might be stopped while he performed his devotions; and when they renewed their noise, he laid his head on the scaffold with a silent composure, which spoke more forcibly to the hearts of the people than the most eloquent oration. *

The protecting part of the act of indemnity gave rise to the most importunate clamours among the royalists. They had formed expectations as unbounded as if the king had been restored to his throne by the force of their arms; and anticipated, in a plenteous harvest of forfeitures, an ample compensation for all their losses and sufferings. When these hopes were finally disappointed by the act of indemnity, they broke forth into bitter invectives against its principal promoter. Clarendon did not

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 238. See in Appendix, p. xiv. some observations by Clarendon on the character of Sir Harry Vane.

shrink from their reproaches ; but fairly acknowledged that the measure, with all its demerits, was his. He reminded them that acts or promises of indemnity ought to be held sacred ; that fidelity in the observation of them was the only foundation on which any government could hope to tranquillize civil commotions ; and that, if the people once thought these promises were made to deceive, all confidence between them and their sovereign would be at an end. “ It was,” he added, “ the making these promises which had brought the king home : and it was the keeping them which must keep him there.” The angry royalists were not to be appeased by such arguments : The king, they said, had in truth passed *an act of oblivion and of indemnity* ; of oblivion to his friends, and of indemnity to his enemies. *

It was from no deficient compassion to the unfortunate royalists that Clarendon resisted their remonstrances. Willingly would he have given them relief by any expedient which did not endanger the renewal of civil convulsions ; and such an expedient he was hopeful of having discovered, previous to the restoration. It was concerted between him and the king, that the principal offices of the state should be bestowed on the most able and meritorious servants ; but with the express provision, that

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 240.

his majesty should retain the right of nominating their subordinate officers. By this means, Clarendon calculated that the king would be enabled to make a competent provision for the most deserving royalists, without either infringing his promises of indemnity, or unprofitably wasting the public treasure. But this well devised scheme became wholly abortive. Monk, now created Duke of Albemarle, was allowed, in consideration of his great services, to engross several posts of extensive patronage; and it was not advisable to disgust him by interfering with the disposal of his subordinate offices. These, to the great scandal of the public, he sold to the highest bidder;* and the unfortunate royalists, who had nothing left to bribe his avarice, were obliged to give place to men who had

* Continuation, p. 46. Clarendon informs us, that Monk himself, out of a deference to the king, would have admitted to his subordinate offices some of those persons who had actually received the royal promise; but that his wife, who even exceeded him in avarice, would hear of no consideration but money. Monk, indeed, appears to have yielded this point to his wife with little reluctance, for Clarendon assures us that whatever other arguments might have been used, "profit was always the highest reason with him." (Ibid. p. 126.) Had Monk bestowed his patronage from more honourable motives, we have reason to suspect his discernment would not have led him to any very proper choice. It was, on one occasion, represented to him that a person whom he had recommended for a Secretary of State was not fit for that function. "Not fit!" replied Monk, "why he can speak French, and write short-hand!"

grown rich by the spoils of their country. The privilege which had been granted to Albemarle could not, with decency, be refused to other ministers; and patronage was thus left to flow unobstructed in its ancient channel. The impatience of the royalists had also given to Charles some disgusts which rendered him much less solicitous about their interests. A few hours after he landed in Kent, he found himself beset by a crowd of these men, who, to seize the first opportunity, compelled him to give them audience, recounted their sufferings and losses, and entreated, as a compensation, the immediate grant of some offices on which they had fixed their eyes.* The prejudice excited by these unseasonable importunities was strengthened, when he found his patronage so circumscribed that he could gratify them only from the money destined for his darling pleasures. Too many of the unfortunate royalists had contracted habits of intoxication, which rendered them unfit for any active employment: nor had either the remembrance of their sufferings, or the joy of the restoration, mitigated the mutual animosities which had embittered their adversity. Every one was more deeply wounded to see another gratified, than himself disappointed. Charles, equally disgusted with their importunities and their quarrels, sought a refuge

* Continuation, p. 8.

from these, as well as from all other cares, amidst the festive riots of his court. *

Next to the act of indemnity, the most important object was the establishment of a revenue for the crown. On this occasion, the parliament displayed a liberality consonant to the joyful feelings of the nation, yet adopted some salutary provisions in regulating the public expenditure. They provided for the discharge of the national debts; and, to prevent the sums voted from being diverted to other purposes, they appointed persons accountable to themselves to watch over the receipt and disbursement. † They voted to the king a permanent annual revenue of twelve hundred thousand pounds, a sum greatly exceeding the allowance to any of his ancestors: but, by allowing his private appointments to remain confounded with the funds of the public, they left an opening to abuses and jealousies, which were afterwards attended with very pernicious effects. The clergy, who had hitherto always taxed themselves in convocation, and had been induced, by their closer connection with the crown, to give higher contributions than the laity, now voluntarily relinquished this unprofitable privilege, and submitted to the general taxation imposed by parliament. From that period, the convocation, being no longer subservient to the views

* Continuation, p. 35, 37, 39.

† Ibid. p. 138.

of government, ceased to be regularly assembled, and has at last fallen into total neglect.

Exertions
for the pre-
rogative.

In the decision of questions where the interests of the king and the people interfered, it seems to have been the uniform aim of Clarendon to bring things back, as nearly as possible, to their situation before the commencement of the civil commotions.* He was unwilling to see the people deprived of any privileges which they had then enjoyed ; but, from a review of late events, he considered the prerogative as more in danger than the liberties of the subject. He procured the restoration of the militia to the crown ; and the repeal of that act which entitled the representatives of the people to assemble of themselves, at the expiration of three years, if the king did not in that period summon them to parliament. This act Clarendon brands as infamous, and inconsistent with all government ; † yet those who lived to the end of the reign of

* He tells us, " he did never dissemble from the time of his return with the king, whom he had likewise prepared and disposed to the same sentiments whilst his majesty was abroad, that the late rebellion could never be extirpated and pulled up by the roots, till the king's regal and inherent power and prerogative should be fully avowed and vindicated ; and till the usurpations in both houses of parliament, since the year 1640, were disclaimed and made odious ; and many other excesses, which had been affected by both, before that time, under the name of privileges, should be restrained or explained." Continuation, p. 727.

† Continuation, p. 420.

Charles II. had often to lament the want of effectual means to secure the frequent assembling of the legislature.

In some points of administration the Chancellor seems to have been disposed to wield the rod of power with too high a hand. The excessive dissipation, into which the court speedily fell, became the general theme of public conversation ; and, in the taverns and coffee-houses, to which, in that age, persons of both sexes daily crowded, the example of the king and courtiers was usually urged as an apology for gross irregularities. Charles could ill bear that royal trespasses should be the usual topic in the mouths of the multitude ; and applied to the Chancellor to devise some remedy for this growing evil. Clarendon admitted that it ought to be repressed ; but, instead of assuring him that the reformation of his conduct was the only effectual means of stopping the evil tongues of men, he complaisantly proposed two expedients ; “ either a proclamation to forbid all persons to resort to those houses, and so totally to suppress them ; or the employment of spies, who, being present in the conversation, might be ready to charge and accuse the persons who had talked with most licence on a subject that would bear complaint.” The king was pleased with both expedients ; but, on being debated in the privy-council, the project of *espion-*

nage was abandoned, on the ground that it would diminish the revenue arising from coffee! *

Policy to-
wards Scot-
land.

The most unwise part of Clarendon's counsels was that which regarded the government of Scotland. Cromwell, after reducing the Scots under the strictest military despotism, had established numerous forts and garrisons, which rendered the recovery of their freedom wholly hopeless. Clarendon, who thought that the Scots and their covenant could not be too closely watched, was of opinion that this system of military coercion should be continued, and Scotland treated as a conquered nation. This ruinous policy, which would have quickly reduced Scotland to a situation not less calamitous than that of Ireland, was successfully resisted. †

Regulation
of the na-
tional judi-
cature.

The system pursued by Clarendon, in regulating the national judicature, deserves the highest praise. He showed his love of liberty, by making no attempt to revive the courts of the Star Chamber and High Commission, which had been, however unjustly, regarded as main props of the sovereign power; and which the complaisant Parliament would probably not have scrupled to re-establish. He filled every department of the judicial functions with men of known attachment to

* Continuation, p. 678, 679.

† Ibid. p. 409. Burnet, Vol. I. p. 151.

the government, yet of acknowledged morality and talents. Some grave and learned judges, who had sat on the bench in the time of Cromwell, were again raised to the same situation; and among these the name of Sir Matthew Hale has obtained particular celebrity.* We readily enter into the triumph which Clarendon expresses at having restored to the nation the blessings of a regular judicature. "Denied it cannot be," says he, "that there appeared, sooner than was thought possible, a general settlement in the civil justice of the kingdom: no man complained without remedy; and every man dwelt again under the shadow of his own vine, without any complaint of injustice and oppression."† He set an eminent example of diligence and integrity in his own judicial conduct: and it is allowed by all, that the office of Lord Chancellor was never more uprightly administered.

Fortunate had it been for the memory of Clarendon, if the same good sense and benevolence, which guided his civil policy, had governed his religious opinions. But, in these, prejudice triumphed over his better judgment; and we find him breathing sentiments, which, in a darker age, would have led him to promote the most cruel persecution. From his early youth, he had im-

*Settlement
of religion.*

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 244.

† Continuation, p. 42.

bibed the maxim of *no bishop, no king*, as an infallible truth ; and had conscientiously instilled into the mind of his sovereign the doctrine, that Episcopacy is the only form of church-government compatible with monarchy. In defence of this favourite tenet, he had entered into acrimonious contests with the dissenters : and as he knew that he had incurred their lasting hatred, by prepossessing both Charles and his father against them, he repaid their animosity by an equally keen aversion. Their desire to prevent him from sharing in the triumph of the Restoration, gave a new edge to his angry feelings ; and, in his memoirs of these times, whenever he has occasion to mention them, he is unable to conceal the antipathy that rankled in his breast. *

The most wise and moderate of the ministers, and among others the Earl of Southampton, were of opinion that nothing could conduce so much to public tranquillity as to follow up the act of indemnity with an act of toleration. As the Pres-

* His prejudices always discover themselves in bitter invectives ; and, when he finds an example of unprincipled conduct in individuals of the hated sect, he hastens to draw a general conclusion from it with regard to the spirit of the whole body. In one passage he adduces two instances of chicane in Presbyterian ministers ; “ by which,” he adds, “ if the humour and spirit of the Presbyterians were not enough discovered and known, their want of ingenuity and integrity would be manifest, and how impossible it is for men who would not be deceived to depend on either.” *Continuation*, p. 341.

byterians differed nothing in doctrine from the Church of England, and were equally the friends of a regular ecclesiastical establishment, they might, it was supposed, be reconciled to Episcopacy by some partial concessions in respect to forms ; and the two predominant bodies of religionists be thus united in support of the government. But to all these lenient propositions Clarendon declared his decided opposition.* He asserted that nothing

* Burnet imagines that Clarendon was originally friendly to the conciliatory system ; but that, in consequence of some private obligations received from the bishops, he went over to their violent measures ; and, by this versatility, disgusted his friend Southampton. But the statements, as well as the strain of sentiments, in Clarendon's later writings, are so irreconcilable to this account, that there seems very little doubt that the bishop was misinformed. In the Continuation of his Life, Clarendon thus enlarges on this subject :—" It is an unhappy policy, and always unhappily applied, to imagine that that class of men (the dissenters) can be recovered and reconciled by partial concessions, or granting less than they demand. And if all were granted, they would have more to ask, somewhat as a security for the enjoyment of what is granted, that shall preserve their power, and shake the whole frame of the government. Their faction is their religion : nor are those combinations ever entered into upon zeal and substantial motives of conscience, how erroneous soever ; but consist of many glutinous materials of will, and humour, and folly, and knavery, and ambition, and malice, which make men cling inseparably together, till they have satisfaction in all their pretences, or till they are absolutely broken and subdued, which may always be more easily done than the other. And if some few, how signal soever, (which often deceives us,) are separated and divided from the herd upon reasonable overtures, and secret rewards which make the overtures look the more reasonable ; they are but so many single men, and have no

was to be expected from acts of conciliation : that concession would only render the sectaries more presumptuous and insolent in their demands : and that no means could improve either their faith or their loyalty, but a system of rigorous and active coercion.*

These opinions of the chancellor, seconded by a parliament devoted to the king and to episcopacy, became the standard for adjusting the religious disputes of the nation. The Church of England was restored to the model of the days of Queen Elizabeth : the ring, the cross, the surplice, the altar, again became stumbling-blocks to weak consciences : an act of uniformity was passed, which compelled all the clergy to express, by an oath, their attachment to the revived ceremonies : and the ensuing day of St Bartholomew was appointed as the term at which they must either conform to this condition, or abandon their livings. This oath, that it might be a test of loyalty as well as of reli-

more credit and authority (whatever they have had) with their companions, than if they had never known them, rather less. Being less mad than they were, makes them thought to be less fit to be believed. And they, whom you think you have recovered, carry always a chagrin about them, which makes them good for nothing, but for instances to divert you from any more of that kind of traffic."

* " Nothing," says he, " but a severe execution of the law can ever prevail upon that class of men to conform to government." *Continuation*, p. 143.

gion, contained a clause by which the clergy were to subscribe to the doctrine of *passive obedience* in its fullest extent ; and to declare their conviction, that no oppression and cruelty on the part of the sovereign could justify his subjects in taking arms against his authority. A doctrine so revolting to common sense disgusted many even of the royalists. The virtuous Earl of Southampton, though the strenuous friend of Clarendon, openly dissented from him on this occasion ; and declared, that if such an oath were to be imposed on the laity, he would himself refuse it. * Nor had the clergy lost the spirit of civil and religious freedom. On the decisive day of St Bartholomew, two thousand of them quitted their benefices ; and preferred poverty to affluence when purchased by an oath which they accounted infamous. The clergymen, who had been deprived of their livings by the revolutionary government, had still been allowed a portion of their former revenues for their maintenance : but those now ejected were denied the most slender provision. Nor was this all ; by a subsequent ordinance, conventicles were suppressed, and the dismissed clergy were prohibited from earning a scanty livelihood by the exercise of their profession. † The provisions of the five-mile-act were

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 329.

† The act against conventicles is applauded by Clarendon as a

still more cruel. By its regulations, no dissenting teacher, who had not taken the oath of passive obedience, was allowed, except in travelling the road, to approach nearer than five miles to any place where he had preached since the act of indemnity : and thus these indigent men were compelled to wander among strangers, deprived of that relief which their former friends and acquaintance might have administered to their distresses. *

measure of peculiar efficacy. " If it had been vigorously executed," says he, " it would no doubt have produced a thorough reformation." (Continuation, p. 421.) So apt are even wise men, where their prejudices are concerned, to form conclusions in opposition to the most universal experience ! The rigours of this act were extreme. Justices of the peace were allowed to convict offenders without a jury. Any meeting for religious worship, at which five were present more than the family, was declared a conventicle. Every person above sixteen, that attended it, was to be imprisoned three months, or to pay L.5 for the first offence : for the second offence, to be imprisoned six months, or pay L.20 : and for the third offence, on conviction by a jury, to be banished to the plantations, or pay L.100.

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 328. This act was strongly opposed by the Earl of Southampton, and by Dr Earl, Bishop of Salisbury, the most esteemed of the prelates. The favour which the ejected clergy obtained among the people, by their conscientious firmness and their sufferings, was much increased by the avarice of some of the bishops, who, as Clarendon himself informs us, prosecuted their claims for arrears with an eagerness and severity, which respected neither the loyalty, the sufferings, nor the poverty of their debtors. (Continuation, p. 185.) Yet Clarendon had endeavoured to select prelates distinguished for learning and zeal ; though, indeed, he was sometimes obliged to yield to other considerations.

While the unfortunate prejudices of Clarendon contributed to renew the distractions of England, they proved still more prejudicial to the tranquillity of Scotland. As the support of Episcopacy was found to be a sure road to favour at court, there

Among the most importunate claimants, who demanded patronage as their due, was Dr Gauden, the author of the *Eikon Basilike*, which loyal credulity so long attributed to the pen of Charles the First. Gauden did not possess loyalty enough to bury his share of the transaction in oblivion, or to forego so fair a claim to royal patronage. He whispered his great *arcanum*, as he calls it, into the unwilling ears of the king and his principal courtiers; and, having produced witnesses of the fact, made no scruple of importunately demanding a reward equal to his merits. In one of his letters to Clarendon, he refreshes his memory by the following narrative of this transaction. After stating that his services had been too much overlooked in regard to that work which "goes under the late blessed king's name, the *EXON* or portraiture of his majesty in his solitude and sufferings," he proceeds: "This book and figure was wholly and only my invention, making, and design, in order to vindicate the king's wisdom, honour, and piety. My wife, indeed, was conscious to it, and had a hand in disguising the letters of that copy which I sent to the king in the Isle of Wight, by the favour of the late Marquis of Hertford, which was delivered to the king by the now Bishop of Winchester. His majesty graciously accepted, owned, and adopted it as his sense and genius; not only with great approbation, but admiration. He kept it with him; and though his cruel murderers went on to perfect his martyrdom, yet God preserved and prospered this book to revive his honour, and redeem his majesty's name from that grave of contempt and abhorrence, or infamy, in which they aimed to bury him. When it came out, just upon the king's death—good God! what shame, rage, and despite filled his murderers! What comfort his friends! How many enemies did it convert! How many hearts did it mol-

was not wanting a numerous body of Scottish lords and gentlemen, who asserted that their countrymen had become disgusted with Presbytery ; and that the re-establishment of Episcopacy there would not only be easy, but infinitely gratifying to the majority of the nation. In this welcome opinion

lily and melt ! What devotions it raised to his posterity, as children of such a father ! What preparations it made in all men's minds for this happy restoration, and which, I hope, shall not prove my affliction ! In a word, it was an army, and did vanquish more than any sword could. My lord, every good subject conceived hopes of restoration—meditated revenge and reparation. Your lordship and all good subjects, with his majesty, enjoy the real and now ripe fruits of that plant : O let not me wither ! who was the author, and ventured wife, children, estate, liberty, life, and all but my soul, in so great an achievement, which hath filled England, and all the world, with the glory of it. I did lately present my faith in it to the Duke of York, and by him to the king ; both of them were pleased to give me credit, and own it a rare service in the horrors of those times. True, I played this best card in my hand something too late ; else I might have sped as well as Dr Reynolds and some others ; but I did not lay it as a ground of ambition, nor use it as a ladder." A ladder, however, it proved, both secure and lofty : for although Gauden was abundantly obnoxious both to the Chancellor and the bishops, from having taken the covenant, yet neither were his claims to be denied, nor his importunities resisted. He was successively created Bishop of Exeter and of Worcester. His letters of solicitation to Clarendon and others, in which he descants at large on the transcendent merits of his *arcana*, are preserved in the Supplement to Clarendon's State Papers. They were published for the first time in the year 1786 ; and it is owing to the want of this decisive evidence, that Hume and many other authors are inclined to give Charles the merit of writing the *Eikon*.

Clarendon had been confirmed by the arts of Dr Sharpe, who, by solemn protestations of his inviolable devotion to Presbytery, had gained the confidence of his brethren, and was deputed to advocate their cause at court; after which he availed himself of this commission to accelerate the introduction of Episcopacy, and to procure for himself the primacy of Scotland. The policy adopted in consequence of these misrepresentations soon involved Scotland in all its former distractions. Episcopacy was established; religious opinions enforced by the sword of the civil magistrate; and disorders engendered which could be subdued only by the dangerous remedy of a new revolution.

But while we lament the prejudiced views of ^{Disinterestedness.} Clarendon in religious matters, we must not forget the merits of his civil policy. If we consider the difficulties of that period of confusion and animosity, we must applaud the dexterity with which he overcame them. If we compare the course of government, while he directed our councils, with that of the latter years of the same reign, we must admire both his patriotism and virtue. His political sagacity, particularly in regard to commerce and foreign connections, may claim little commendation: but it has not been denied that he uniformly aimed at ends which his conscience approved. We discover no instance in which his authority was

employed for selfish purposes. Though his original fortune was small, and had been wasted during the civil commotions, he adopted no means to repair it, beyond the regular emoluments of his office as Chancellor. Both the king, and his colleagues in the ministry, sensible of the inadequacy of his fortune, endeavoured to force on his acceptance various grants of money and land : but, in that period of solicitation and expectancy, he thought he should best escape envy, by setting an example of that disinterestedness which he inculcated on others. It was only in some peculiar circumstances that he was induced to depart from this resolution. The Duke of Ormond, and some other of his most valued friends in the ministry, perceiving the incessant fatigue which he underwent, would have persuaded him to relinquish his judicial office of Chancellor, and devote himself entirely to affairs of state, under the appellation of Prime Minister. But Clarendon decided on declining a distinction so invidious, and recognised only in the unlimited government of France. He also knew that Charles, although extremely willing to purchase leisure for his pleasures, by consigning his whole government into the hands of his servants, was of all men most averse to be thought subject to the guidance of a favourite : and would speedily be disgusted with those remonstrances from a Prime

Minister, which he easily endured from his Chancellor. *

From the commencement of his ministry, Clarendon perceived that, however, cautious his conduct, his exaltation would attract around him a cloud of envy. But his personal attachment to his sovereign was too great to make him shrink from the most obnoxious interference, when conducive to the interests of Charles. With the exception of a few favourites, whom he determined to gratify, the king uniformly referred the crowds of importunate suitors to the chancellor, who made no scruple to undertake the invidious part of rejecting all unreasonable requests. Even when Charles disposed of offices, contrary to his advice, Clarendon still justified the conduct of his prince; and thus often innocently incurred the odium of an improper distribution of patronage.† This uncommon devotion the king for some time repaid with the most obliging attentions. He listened to the chancellor's advice on every occasion, and seemed happy when he could prevail on him to accept any testimony of his esteem. When Clarendon was afflicted with the gout, which frequently happened, Charles always repaired to his house to consult on public affairs; and occasionally summoned the

Devotion to
the king.

* Continuation, p. 85.

† Burnet, Vol. I. p. 133.

privy-council to attend in the minister's bed-chamber. *

Shocked by
the king's
principles.

Yet, amidst all these marks of favour, there were circumstances in the conduct of the king, which must have given uneasy presages to the chancellor. Charles was a decided sceptic in regard to human virtue. He believed, that, if either man or woman practised sincerity or chastity, it was merely to save appearances, and gratify their vanity. No one, he thought, served him from attachment ; and he viewed all around him with indifference as the selfish instruments of his ease and pleasures. † On a mind so prepossessed against the better sentiments of the heart, the disinterested zeal of Clarendon could make but a faint impression. When the chancellor refused the gifts of the king, as beyond his deserts, and tending to excite general envy against him ; Charles was accustomed to remind him with a smile, that *it is better to be envied than pitied*. ‡ The French government, desirous to gain the good will of the English minister, instructed its agent to present him secretly with a large sum of money, which was to be con-

* The meetings of the Secret Committee, consisting of Clarendon, and some of his colleagues in whom he most confided, were usually held at Worcester House, then the residence of the chancellor ; and were generally attended by the king and the Duke of York.

† Burnet, Vol. I. p. 131.

‡ Continuation, p. 83.

tinued as a yearly pension. Clarendon heard this proposition with indignation : but when he informed Charles of the insult which had been offered to him, the king laughed in his face, and told him *he was a fool*. * Even the kindest acts of Charles must have lost much of their grace, when the minister felt that they proceeded not from attachment, but from a mere aversion to labour. † And he had but too ample proof of the precarious tenure of a prince's favour, when a train of events, which shall now be explained, rendered his disgrace more convenient to the sovereign than his exaltation.

While Clarendon attended his exiled master, his daughter had been received as a maid of honour into the family of the Princess of Orange, formerly Princess Royal of England ; and had there embellished the natural charms of her person and wit, by the most admired accomplishments of a court. She had followed her father to England, and taken a conspicuous part in the festivities of the restoration ; but the general attention which her attractions excited was converted into astonishment, when she was discovered to be pregnant, and declared the Duke of York to be her husband, and the father of her child. On this unexpected event, the court was immediately rent into violent fac-

Conduct relative to his daughter's marriage : 1680.

* Continuation, p. 175.

† Ibid. p. 88.

tions. The queen dowager hastened from France, to prevent her son from acknowledging a marriage, which, in her eyes, would fix an indelible stain on her lineage : and the duke himself was for some time moved by the calumnies, which were assiduously propagated against the object of his affections. But the king, who still entertained a just value for the services of his chancellor, declared, that, as the marriage was found on examination to be valid, he would on no account consent to its disavowal. At length, all opposition ceased : the duke, discovering the falsehood of his suspicions, acknowledged his wife ; and the dowager queen received the duchess as her daughter. *

* Continuation, p. 50—75. The change in the queen's behaviour, which was sudden and unexpected, was afterwards discovered, to the astonishment of Clarendon, to have proceeded from the interference of his old enemy Cardinal Mazarine. Her majesty, finding that she could not prevent the marriage from being openly acknowledged, was preparing, in the height of her displeasure, to quit the English court, and return to France. But the Cardinal, whose policy led him to cultivate the friendship of every successive government of England, was by no means inclined to quarrel with the young king, or his favourite minister ; and therefore wrote to the dowager queen, very plainly intimating, that, if she left her sons in displeasure, she would meet with no good welcome in France. The hint produced the intended effect. Her majesty quickly received the duchess as her daughter ; and was reconciled to the chancellor with many gracious expressions of friendship. In closing the relation of this incident, Clarendon strongly characterizes the insincere and vindictive temper of this princess. " From that period," says he, " there did never appear any want

The behaviour of Clarendon, during this embarrassing transaction, was conspicuous for propriety. He solemnly declared that the whole transaction was as new to him as to the rest of the nation. He refused to take any steps towards vindicating the honour of a daughter, who, unknown to him, had wilfully subjected her family to danger and disgrace : and amidst the ferment of the court, he appeared the only man who was not concerned in the event. He would address no solicitations either to the Queen or the Duke of York ; and when both of them began to give indications of a favourable disposition, he refused to make the first advances. He even went so far as, in his official capacity, to advise the king that the marriage should be disavowed, or the presumption of his daughter subjected to the penalties of treason. * Though we may distrust the sincerity of self-denial carried so far, it is apparent that he derived more apprehension than satisfaction from the unusual exaltation of his family. Observing his son elevated with the royal affinity, he sadly assured him that it would sooner or later prove the ruin of them all : and such, even then, were the hopes formed by his enemies. For the present, however, neither envy nor censure

of kindness in the queen towards me, whilst I stood in no need of it, nor until it might have done me good." Continuation, p. 75.

* Continuation, p. 55.

seemed to be excited. The people were pleased to find that a wise and loyal minister was not to be dishonoured in his family, from an adherence to rules which had formerly been thought unnecessary in England. Charles behaved to him with all that gracious demeanour in which he knew to excel. Without the chancellor's privity, he caused a patent for a peerage to be made out for him, accompanied by a grant of twenty thousand pounds, to support the title : and the minister accepted these proofs of royal favour with a satisfaction that could be imparted only by his escape from a situation of great embarrassment. *

The marriage of the king.

The chancellor had, about this time, a considerable share in negotiating the marriage of the king. The people, who looked on the popish religion with dread and abhorrence, would have rejoiced to see their monarch united to a Protestant princess : but Charles was very indifferent about religion, and looked merely to the splendour of the alliance. He therefore willingly listened to the overtures of the Portuguese ambassador, who proffered the

* He was, on this occasion, created a baron, a title which he had often declined, as inconsistent with his limited fortune. He afterwards irritated the Duke of York by refusing the Order of the Garter : and it was only from an unwillingness to disoblige his Royal Highness, who reproached him as too proud to receive any favour through his means, that he was at length prevailed on to accept an earldom. Continuation, p. 82.

daughter of his sovereign, with a tempting dowry : five hundred thousand pounds in money, several commercial advantages, the town of Tangiers, on the coast of Africa, and the settlement of Bombay, in the East Indies. As the princess was reported to be of a mild and discreet temper, and Portugal was much less disliked than France or Spain, the choice was applauded by the ministers, the parliament, and the nation : and the same sentiments were expressed by Clarendon, who saw no reason to oppose the union, and who, of all men in the kingdom, could with least grace have opposed it, after the marriage of his own daughter to the heir apparent of the crown. While this negotiation was pending, the ambassador of Spain, whose court had not yet acknowledged the independence of Portugal, employed every art to frustrate the alliance ; and procured some partisans in the English court to second his designs. Reports were spread that the princess was deformed ; that she had various inherent distempers ; that, from some natural defect, she was incapable of bearing children. Offers were made to the king, on the part of Spain, of a large dowry with any bride whom he should select from among the princesses of Italy ; and the Earl of Bristol, who possessed a peculiar talent in that way, was employed to inflame his fancy with the description of their luxurious conversations. By these arts Charles was almost diverted from the

Portuguese alliance : but, on detecting the malice of the Spaniards, and on perceiving, from the representations of Clarendon and the other ministers, that it would be both foolish and dishonourable, on such vain grounds, to break off a negotiation so nearly concluded, he proceeded in the transaction with his original cordiality. On the arrival of his bride, he found no reason for dissatisfaction either in her manners or her person. *

The Duchess
of Cleveland.

But Charles had already drunk deep of vices incompatible with conjugal felicity. Amidst his numerous favourites, he had been particularly capti-

* Some historians, Mr Hume in particular, as if to excuse the subsequent conduct of Charles, allege that the queen was homely, if not disgusting, in her person, and that the king thought so from the first. But there is the strongest evidence that this was not the case. Clarendon, who had an opportunity of knowing better than any writer, expressly says, "the queen had beauty and wit enough to make herself very agreeable to his majesty; and it is very certain, that, at their first meeting, and for some time after, the king had very good satisfaction in her." Continuation, p. 318. Lord Sandwich, the ambassador who brought her over, expatiates, in his letters, on the "most lovely and agreeable person of the queen." Supplement to State Papers, p. 20. The Earl of Portland, who attended the king at his marriage, writes to Clarendon, that his majesty, as soon as he saw the princess, was so well pleased with her, as readily to give way to some perplexing prejudices which she had in regard to the marriage ceremony. Ibid. p. 21. Bishop Burnet assures us, "he saw the letter which the king writ to the Earl of Clarendon the day after the marriage, by which it appeared very plainly, that the king was well pleased with her." Burnet, Vol. I. p. 253.

vated by the charms of Mrs Palmer, a lady of the race of Villiers, who was not more distinguished for her beauty than for the want of every virtue. Her undisguised amours with Charles had procured her the appellation of the royal mistress; and a son, whom she bore during the negotiations with Portugal, was openly acknowledged by the king as his own. When his young queen came over, Charles had formed some transient resolutions to estrange himself from his mistress; but, by the arts of the lady, and of the courtiers who depended on her favour, these impressions were speedily effaced from his mind. He had formed his notions of royal gallantry in the voluptuous court of France. He thought that a father or a husband ought to account his daughter or his wife not degraded but honoured by the embraces of his sovereign; and that the mistress of a prince ought to be regarded in a very different light from other concubines. In the same school he had learnt that the wife of a king ought to divest herself of the natural feelings of a woman, to permit the libertinism of her husband, and even receive his mistress on the footing of a companion. In conformity with these notions, he had the inhumanity, in the presence of the whole court, to introduce Mrs Palmer to the queen, a short time after his marriage. The wretched princess, though pierced to the heart by discovering the alienation of her husband's af-

fections, endeavoured to suppress her poignant feelings, and to receive the mistress with smiles. But the effort was beyond her strength. As she retired to her chair, the tears gushed from her eyes, the blood from her nose, and she fainted away.

Charles, instead of being melted, was enraged by an incident which so forcibly accused him of cruelty, and presaged an unwelcome disobedience to his commands. He now devoted his nights to dissolute revels : he took no pains to conceal the ascendancy of his mistress : he attempted to ennoble her by conferring the Earldom of Castlemain on her husband, who indignantly rejected this badge of his dishonour : and was so infatuated as to insist with his queen to receive his paramour as a lady of her bed-chamber. This new affront awakened all the spirit of the princess. She firmly refused to subscribe to her own degradation, and to admit into her train a woman who was lost to honour, and who had so deeply wounded her happiness. The people sympathized with her virtuous indignation ; and even Charles could not withhold his esteem from the victim of his injustice. Yet, more alive to pride than to any generous feeling, he determined to subdue her spirit by severity. He dismissed her Portuguese attendants : he allowed his companions to jest with her name in their nocturnal debauches : and he gave very plain

intimation that all who looked for his favour must pay their court to his mistress. The queen now found herself consigned to cruel neglect : she saw the favourite of her husband lodged in her palace ; and, even in her presence, receiving the homage of the nobility. The mistress was met, wherever she turned, by the sounds of gaiety ; the queen alone seemed doomed to perpetual unhappiness. Her fortitude was unequal to such a trial : she gradually fell from that elevated tone in which she found no one to support her : and at length condescended to the humiliating art of caressing the object of her aversion. Charles triumphed in a degradation which lessened the public interest for the queen : and endeavoured, at a subsequent period, to add new dignity to his mistress, (who was now divorced from her husband,) by creating her Duchess of Cleveland. *

The adoption of such profligate principles in a court could not fail to afflict a virtuous minister. Clarendon had endeavoured, by every argument, to dissuade his sovereign from a conduct, which would blast his reputation, and shake his authority. He represented to him that such infamous connections were universally odious in England ; “that a woman, who prostituted herself to the king, was equally infamous to all women of honour, and

* Continuation, p. 330—343.

must expect the same contempt from them, as if she were common to mankind ; and that no enemy he had could advise him a more sure way to lose the hearts and affections of the people, than the indulging himself in such licentiousness." We learn with regret that the Chancellor, after this bold avowal, should have been prevailed on to undertake the task of persuading the queen to yield to her husband's commands, and to receive his mistress among the ladies of her bed-chamber. This compliance on the part of Clarendon seems to have proceeded from an anxious desire to conciliate the king and queen, and, in all other respects, his behaviour was entirely worthy of himself, and of his station. While the courtiers strove to distinguish themselves by their obeisance to the mistress, he disdained to countenance her by the slightest attention ; and even refused to affix the great seal to any grant in which she was named. * The Earl of Southampton alone acted the same honourable part ; and would never suffer her name to be inserted in the treasury books. From that time forward, Charles began to look with secret dissatisfaction on ministers whose morality was a permanent reproach on his own conduct ; and to

* In consequence of this refusal, she was obliged to transmit to Ireland the patents for her new title, to pass under the seal of that kingdom.

give up his better judgment to the vindictive spirit of the mistress. *

While a foundation of dislike to the Chancellor was thus laid in the royal breast, some occurrences of a very different nature served to render him unpopular with the public. Cromwell, as a consideration for uniting his arms with France, had obtained the town of Dunkirk, which he had aided in wresting from the Spaniards. This acquisition gave general satisfaction as an equivalent for Calais, and the Protector had endeavoured to give it importance by strengthening the fortifications, and improving the harbour. But it was found to be a possession more popular than beneficial; and the yearly expence of the garrison (L. 120,000 Sterling) became an insupportable burden to the prodigal and necessitous Charles. This consideration having made the court very desirous to be rid of the charge, the military men readily discovered that the place was untenable by land, and useless as a naval station. A resolution was, therefore, speedily formed to dispose of it by sale to some continental power. As Spain was too poor to pay for it, and Holland too weak to retain it, France was selected as the proper purchaser; and, after some negotiation, the place was transferred to her, for about four hundred thousand pounds.

The sale of
Dunkirk.
1661.

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 239.

The odium, arising from a transaction which was accounted dishonourable, no less in itself, than from the uses to which the price was applied, fell very generally on the Chancellor, who was represented as its principal adviser and promoter. He assures his readers, however, that he was, at first, extremely averse to the measure; and that the sale was resolved on between the king and the other ministers, before his advice was asked.* He does not, however, deny that he was gained over by the arguments of his colleagues; and it is certain that he was very earnest in pressing the court of France to give favourable terms.† How far the transac-

* Continuation, p. 381.

† See the correspondence which passed between him and the French ambassador, the Count d'Estrade, on this occasion. If Clarendon does not utter the following sentiments, merely as a piece of diplomatic finesse, to enhance the value of the place, he certainly incurred, with open eyes, the reproach of this transaction. He thus writes to d'Estrade, August 9, 1661: "They who know any thing of the present temper of this kingdom must believe, that, as the delivery of that place would never be consented to by the parliament, or, in truth, by the privy-council, if it should be referred to their judgment, so the delivering it up by the king's immediate authority, will be as ungracious and unpopular an act to the whole nation as can be put in practice." These considerations Clarendon states as an argument for the king's demanding such a price, as would for some time enable him to do without the supplies which the parliament would, on this account, be disposed to refuse him. "I shall hold myself the most unfortunate man, if this affair be not crowned with success;" says he in another letter to d'Estrade.

tion itself deserves the reproach it has incurred, appears very doubtful. Neither the fortifications nor the harbour bore any comparison to their importance since Louis XIV. bestowed such vast sums on their improvement. The place, if tenable, might have proved a convenient inlet to our armies, and a desirable retreat in the event of disaster: it might have proved a station to our own, instead of the enemy's privateers. But it may reasonably be doubted whether these advantages could have counterbalanced the waste it must have occasioned of the national revenues.

The first open instance of displeasure, which the Chancellor experienced from the king, took its rise from a religious question. Charles had formed a strong attachment to the Romish religion, from its inculcating a blind submission to princes as well as to priests: and, before the Restoration, he had resolved, if he ever regained his throne, to mitigate the legal penalties which depressed a faith so congenial to his notions of government. He soon, however, perceived that there existed a strong prejudice against the Catholics, and that no favour could be extended to them without including the dissenters at large. Clarendon's inflexibility on these subjects being well known, the advisers of Charles acted without his knowledge: and it was with no small surprise that the Chancellor saw introduced into parliament, under the royal sanction,

The act of indulgence to dissenters.

a bill to invest the king with a discretionary power of dispensing, for a reasonable fine, with the penal laws against all religious sects. Charles, indeed, declared that the increase of his revenue by gracious acts of dispensation was his sole object in this measure : but the Chancellor concluded that the effect of such a dispensing power would be to give indulgence to the Catholics only, the Protestant dissenters being as odious to the king as to himself. * He therefore determined, in opposition to the king's earnest remonstrance, to resist the bill openly in the House of Lords ; and, in spite of all the exertions of the courtiers, he succeeded in procuring its rejection. †

The king expressed the greatest indignation at this conduct of the Chancellor ; and though he did not as yet find it convenient to withdraw his apparent kindness, he listened more readily to the arts employed to diminish the influence of the minister. The nightly club of licentious wits, with whom Charles now associated, became more direct in their ridicule, and Villiers, Duke of Buckingham,

* The greater indulgence of the king to the Papists than the Protestant dissenters was well known to Clarendon. In the minutes of a conversation between the Chancellor and his majesty, which have been preserved, the king remarks, " For my part, rebel for rebel, I had rather trust a Papist rebel than a Presbyterian one." Supplement to State Papers, p. 47.

† Continuation, p. 469—473.

ham, who excelled as a mimic, often contributed to the mirth of the company by personating the formal motions, and grave enunciation of the Chancellor. If the king happened to say that he would ride or hunt next day, one would immediately lay a bet that he should not; "for," said he, "the Chancellor will never permit it." "Nay," another would rejoin, "I protest I cannot believe there is any ground for that imputation: though, indeed, such things are talked of abroad." On this, Charles, who could not endure to be thought under such restraint, would eagerly assure them that, unless in matters of public business, the Chancellor had not the slightest sway over him: and the wits would then, with a sneer, congratulate him on this discovery of his freedom.

While such arts gradually alienated the mind of the prince from his minister, Clarendon felt himself extremely embarrassed in his public duties by the associates who were forced upon him. Henry Bennet, afterwards known as the Earl of Arlington, had so well paid his court to the mistress and the club of wits, that he was raised to the office of Secretary of State, which Sir Edward Nicholas had been induced to resign: and the Chancellor was thus at once deprived of a tried friend, and

associated with a personal enemy. * Sir William Coventry, who had acquired much credit with the king, by lessening the merits of other men ; and Lord Ashley, who was true to any principle only as long as it served his views ; were successively introduced into the most secret transactions of state : and Clarendon had now the mortification to see his counsels debated and thwarted by men, who had no other end but to exalt themselves on the ruin of his power. †

The Dutch
War.
1665.

Their schemes were unfortunately promoted by a measure, in which he had to contest with folly and injustice on the part both of the king and the people. The Dutch had, at that period, carried commerce to an extent hitherto unknown ; and the treasures, which they annually imported from the East and West Indies had become the admiration and envy of all Europe. The English, their most immediate rivals, beheld their success with peculiar jealousy ; and a company of our countrymen, who had obtained a charter for the African trade, found their enterprises in that quarter wholly eclipsed by the superior industry and experience of the Dutch. Great discontent was expressed by these disappointed adventurers : the traffic of the Dutch was represented as an unjust encroachment on some sup-

* Continuation, p. 347, 372.

† Ibid. p. 348, 466.

posed right of England to the exclusive commerce of that coast : and a war was suggested as the only effectual means of expelling our successful rivals. While the merchants, who, of all classes, seem most blind to the real interests of their country, were thus deluding themselves into the expectation of vast benefits from hostilities, the Duke of York, who panted for an opportunity to distinguish himself, eagerly seconded the clamour for war. * The king, unwilling to involve himself in any expence but for his pleasures, for some time resisted these counsels : till at length dazzled by the hope of rich prizes, and, perhaps, by the prospect of converting a portion of the supplies to his own private purposes, he determined to concur with the general wish. The Dutch, not less proud than their rivals, were easily forced by some insults into hostilities. †

* Continuation, p. 378.

† The English had already begun to maintain very high tenets with regard to the empire of the seas. They talked, says Clarendon, “ of giving law to the whole trade of Christendom ; of making all ships which passed by or through the narrow seas pay an imposition to the king of England. The rules prescribed to judge by in the prize-courts were such as were warranted by no former precedents, nor acknowledged to be just by the practice of any neighbouring nation ; and such as would make all ships which traded for Holland, from what kingdom soever, lawful prize.” Continuation, p. 461. These tenets Clarendon loudly condemns as a violation of all justice, and calculated to render all nations the enemies of England.

Clarendon, supported by no counsellor but the Earl of Southampton, opposed, by every argument, this ruinous national distemper. But all his patriotic efforts only drew on him the imputation of pusillanimity, of a want of public spirit, or of some treacherous understanding with the enemies of his country. At last, on seeing that the evil was inevitable, he consulted the interests of his master by advising him to procure adequate supplies, before the national zeal should cool, and the people, disappointed in their chimerical hopes, should begin to charge the consequences of their own folly on the misconduct of government. By his advice a supply of two millions and a half, a far greater sum than had ever been granted, was required from the parliament; and so popular was the cause, that this extraordinary demand was acquiesced in without hesitation. *

The war was attended with brilliant success to our countrymen. The Dutch saw their naval commanders baffled; their fleets driven from the sea; their merchantmen destroyed in their very harbours. Yet even a succession of triumphs was insufficient to maintain the delusive enthusiasm of the people: the loss on our side was heavy: the young courtiers, who had hastened on board, to partake in a series of triumphs, gradually felt their ardour

* Continuation, p. 440.

abated by the rude alarms of the enemy and the ocean. The Dutch, though often defeated, still seemed possessed of inexhaustible resources ; and at length became more formidable than ever, when joined by the French, who could not quietly view the triumph of the English. The prizes, from which such sanguine hopes had been formed, enriched only a few adventurers ; and the supplies voted by parliament were speedily consumed in extensive armaments. The people, who felt their dreams of sudden riches converted into demands for extraordinary contributions, were further depressed by a dreadful pestilence which ravaged the kingdom, and a fire which laid the metropolis in ashes : nor was it to be expected, amidst these complicated disasters, that considerable supplies could be procured from the dispirited nation. In these circumstances, Charles, who found the embarrassments of war become daily a more unseasonable interruption to his pleasures, readily hearkened to the overtures of peace, made by the French in behalf of themselves and their allies. Meantime, he resolved to diminish his expenditure by confirming himself entirely to defensive measures, and fitting out no armament for the next season. This economical arrangement would enable him to convert to more grateful purposes a new supply of one million eight hundred thousand pounds, which had been granted by parliament.

The Dutch, who smarted under their late dis-

1667.

graces, perceived, in this remissness of their enemies, an opportunity of retaliation. Having equipped a powerful fleet, they suddenly entered the Thames; and, easily demolishing some feeble forts erected for the defence of the river, overwhelmed the capital with consternation. They took and plundered Sheerness, sailed up the Medway, and burnt several of the largest ships of the navy. They next steered their course to Portsmouth, to Plymouth, to Harwich; and after having insulted these places, and again sailed up the Thames as far as Tilbury, they returned in triumph to their own shores. The whole kingdom was filled with dismay and indignation: but it was no longer time to meditate revenge; and as the Dutch were now willing to accelerate a peace, a treaty was concluded, by which the English renounced every point for which they had ostensibly undertaken the war.

Extreme
unpopularity.

The stream of popular reproach now ran violently against the Chancellor, who was stigmatised as the author of all disastrous counsels. The relaxation of the military preparations, the defenceless state of the Thames, * the unfavourable con-

* We cannot but smile at the manner in which Clarendon frees himself from this charge, which was entirely the concern of the military officers. He assures us "he was so totally unskilful in the knowledge of the coast and the river, that he knew not where *Sheerness* was, nor had ever heard of the name of such a place till the late events, nor had ever been on any part of the river with any other thought about him, than to get on shore as soon as could be possible." *Continuation*, p. 762.

ditions of the peace, were without scruple laid to his charge. No party was inclined to undertake his defence. The Catholics and the Dissenters looked on him as their implacable enemy ; nor had the royalists forgot his share in the act of indemnity and oblivion. The courtiers saw in him an absorber of power, and a stern reprover of their licentiousness ; and the death of his virtuous friend, the Earl of Southampton, * which took place in this unfortunate conjuncture, left him as unsupported in the council as in the nation. The populace, too apt to believe all reports which coincide with their passions, opened their ears to the grossest charges. He had resolved to erect a good family mansion on a piece of ground which he had received from the king, in the neighbourhood of St James's : but, by the unskilfulness or fraud of the architect, the edifice swelled to a palace, and the expence to fifty thousand pounds, three times

* The Earl of Southampton was not less obnoxious to the mistress and the courtiers than Clarendon. The king had been wrought up to a resolution of depriving him of the office of treasurer, but was diverted from this purpose by the earnest intercession of the chancellor. As his dissolution approached, the courtiers renewed their instances ; and, when within five or six days of his death, they again persuaded the king to deprive him of the treasurer's staff. Clarendon, however, succeeded in preventing this act of royal ingratitude from giving a pang to the last moments of his friend. Continuation, p. 781. See in Appendix, p. xiv. Clarendon's opinion of this respected nobleman,

the original estimate. As such an expenditure was evidently inconsistent with his slender fortune, the populace readily believed that it was supported by the sale of the national interests. Some called the building *Dunkirk House*, and others *Holland House*; intimating that he had received bribes from the French and the Dutch to promote their views. *

Falls under
the king's
displeasure.

Nor was Charles displeased to see the popular clamour directed against the chancellor. The excesses of the court, which outraged every feeling of morality and decency, had excited violent discontents among the people, and a formidable opposition even in a parliament of royalists. The king had at length found his Commons, so lately the advocates of passive obedience, more ready to inquire into abuses than to grant supplies; and he was very willing to regain their favour by the sacrifice of a suspected minister. While he involved himself, by his weakness and prodigality, in the most irksome difficulties, † he was led, by

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 365.

† Charles could scarcely refuse the most unreasonable demand, when urged with importunity: but Clarendon assures us that this proceeded, both in this prince and in all his family, not from any generous liberality, but merely from imbecility. "They did not love," says the chancellor, "to deny, and less to strangers than to their friends; not out of bounty or generosity, which was a flower that did never grow naturally in the heart of either of the

the artful representations of his courtiers, to believe that the chancellor would use no influence to procure him supplies. He gave ear to a report that, at the period of the Restoration, this minister might easily have obtained for him a fixed revenue of two millions a-year; but had declined it lest it should render the king too independent of Parliament.*

Another instance of supposed opposition, which Charles could less pardon, was also charged on Clarendon. A young lady of the name of Stewart had lately appeared at court, with every attraction which could inflame the breast of a lover. The king soon declared himself her passionate admirer; and as he found her virtue proof against all dishonourable advances, he resolved, if possible, to legitimate his addresses. His queen had brought him no children; and, though he knew that she had once at least been pregnant, he now countenanced a calumny, formerly circulated by the Spanish ambassador, that she was incapable, from some natural defect, of bearing children. On this ground, or on another allegation, that she had taken the vows of a religious order previous to her marriage, the king had formed a scheme of procuring a divorce by act of parliament. The opposition

families, that of Stuart or the other of Bourbon, but out of an unskillfulness and defect in the countenance." Continuation, p. 644.

* Continuation, p. 232. Wellwood's Memoirs.

which Clarendon made to a design, which, besides its injustice, might have involved the state in a disputed succession, received the harshest construction ; and it was currently given out by the courtiers, that he had artfully seduced the king into a barren marriage, to secure the throne to his own descendants. While the divorce was in agitation, the object of the king's new attachment, unwilling to become involved either in dishonour or injustice, privately gave her hand to the Duke of Richmond ; and the king, during the paroxysm of his anger at the discovery of this union, having conceived a suspicion that it was promoted by Clarendon, began to breathe implacable revenge against his innocent minister. *

Obnoxious
to the Par-
liament.

During the consternation excited by the appearance of the Dutch fleet in the Thames, the Parliament had been hastily summoned, though under a prorogation for several months. Clarendon endeavoured to dissuade the king from assembling the members, while incensed by the recent disasters : and the disposition, which they immediately manifested, having justified this advice, it was found expedient to dismiss them till the period assigned by the prorogation. The members were displeased

* Clarendon solemnly assures us that he had no interference whatever in the marriage of the Duke of Richmond. He wrote to the king with protestations to the same purpose, but Charles was too angry to hearken to them. Continuation, p. 660.

with the authors of a counsel which deprived them of an opportunity to vent their discontents; and still more irritated by a report that the Chancellor had advised the king to dissolve them and summon a new parliament. Clarendon had, indeed, already made himself enemies in both houses by his attempts to recal them to moderation. He had offended the Commons by resisting their encroachments on the privileges of the peers; and the Lords, by advising them to renounce some obnoxious immunities, which they claimed for themselves and their servants. *

The Earl of Bristol, once known as the patriotic Lord Digby, had, during the exile of the king, embraced the Romish religion, with a view to the improvement of his fortunes; and having, in consequence, been deprived of the secretaryship of state, he conceived a bitter animosity against his former friend the Chancellor, to whom he unjustly attributed his loss of office. He had even had the folly to prefer an impeachment against the minister: and although this attempt, supported neither by proofs nor by reasonable allegations, had only exposed himself to ridicule, he continued actively to promote every cabal among the lords against Clarendon. The Duke of Buckingham, though a man of no principle, had the dexterity to at-

* Continuation, p. 730.

tach to himself a number of adherents ; and after having intrigued with Cromwell, and subsequently ingratiated himself with the king, was now at the head of a formidable opposition in parliament. On one occasion, the Chancellor having detected him in a conspiracy to excite insurrection, advised the king to commit him to the Tower : on another occasion, he, from selfish views, opposed a bill introduced by Buckingham, to prevent the importation of Irish cattle into England. For both these reasons, Buckingham avowedly sought the overthrow of Clarendon ; and actively concurred with the king's friends in preparing the parliament to attack him.

Deprived of
his office.

In the meantime the king, growing impatient to be rid of his minister, intimated to him, through the Duke of York, a desire to accept his resignation ; assuring him, at the same time, that this step proceeded from certain information that the parliament would impeach him, and that this was the only way to save him from the fate of Strafford. Clarendon, who had, a few days before, sustained a cruel affliction by the death of his wife, the faithful partner of all his fortunes, could not conceal his surprise at this unseasonable intimation. He demanded an audience, and there informed his majesty, that, though he should not regret to quit an office where his services were no longer ac-

ceptable; yet he would never, by a voluntary resignation, either show a willingness to desert the government in a season of difficulty; or a desire to avoid the scrutiny of parliament. He reminded the king, that Strafford, though not guilty of high treason, had committed many unjustifiable and mean measures: but that, for his own part, he stood secure in conscious innocence; and that he should consider his removal from office, in such a conjuncture, as a measure intended, not to screen him from his enemies, but to expose him to their most resentments. The king was ill prepared for the language of independence: he considered the chancellor as setting his power at defiance; and refused to listen to the intercession of the Duke of York, who warmly interested himself in the cause of his father-in-law. In a few days, his majesty August 13, 1667. sent one of the Secretaries of State, with a warrant under the sign manual, to receive the great seal, which the chancellor immediately delivered into his hands.

But the enemies of Clarendon deemed their advantage insecure, so long as he should not be ruined in character, and expelled the kingdom. The Duke of Buckingham, who was now restored to full favour at court, did not fail to excite his partisans in parliament to a prosecution: and, by the orders of the king, the dependents of government

Impeached
of high treason.

promoted the same intrigues.* At length, an impeachment was drawn up by the Commons, consisting of fifteen articles, and exhibiting a lasting monument of the infamy of his accusers. In these it was alleged, that Clarendon had advised the king to discontinue parliaments, and govern by a standing army : that he affirmed the king to be a papist in his heart : that he had, from interested motives, deluded the king, and betrayed the nation in all foreign negotiations : † that he had received large sums of money for procuring illegal patents, and for various other nefarious transactions : that, by these practices, and by obtaining improper grants from the crown, he had suddenly accumulated an enormous estate : that he had effected the sale of Dunkirk far below its value : that he had introduced an arbitrary government into the plantations : and that he had advised some

* Among others who were very actively engaged in exciting the parliament against Clarendon was the Duke of Albemarle, (Monk,) who had formerly loaded him with professions of friendship. This man, who, with his wife, was resolved not to lose court favour on any account, now strenuously urged the members “no longer to adhere to the chancellor, since the king resolved to ruin him, and would look on all who were his friends as enemies to his majesty.” Continuation, p. 857.

† The only gift, he assures us, which he ever received from a foreign prince, was a present of the books of the Louvre press from the French king. These must have been acceptable to him as a scholar. We have seen the indignation with which he rejected pecuniary offers from the same monarch.

naval operations which prevented a decisive victory over the enemy. These accusations, *all of which Clarendon offered to acknowledge if one of them could be proved*, * were found, on deliberation, to be far short of high treason : and though some resolute members declared, that, if any articles were introduced, which should indisputably amount to treason, they would pledge themselves to make it good, yet it was thought preferable to impeach him only in general terms, and to demand his imprisonment. With the last request the Lords refused to comply until specific charges should be produced against him ; and they were indignant that the Commons should endeavour to alter the ancient forms of justice, by a precedent derived from the odious proceedings against Strafford.

A violent breach now ensued between the houses of Parliament ; the Lords refused to commit a member of their house on a general charge ; and the Commons represented this refusal as an obstruction to justice. From the obstinacy of the Commons in this point, Clarendon perceived that their object was to have him thrown into prison, where they might hope to detain him under various pretences, without proceeding to his trial : and there was no punishment of which he entertained a greater apprehension. † Yet for some time he re-

Leaves the
kingdom.
November
29, 1667.

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 374.

† Continuation, p. 858.

sisted the importunities of his friends, who pressed him to withdraw from the storm ; and it was not till he had received intimation that such a step would be acceptable to the king, that he at length acquiesced. He embarked at midnight on the Thames in a small vessel ; and after being tossed about for three days, at length reached the first stage of his exile at Calais. *

He left behind him an address to the House of Lords, in which he satisfactorily vindicated himself from the misrepresentations of his enemies. He assured them that the greatness of his fortune, which had formed a pretence for so many groundless charges, existed only in the fancy of his accusers : that his whole property, after paying his debts, would not exceed two thousand pounds a year : that such an estate might well be derived from the regular emoluments of his office : that he had, on one occasion, (which has been mentioned,) received twenty thousand pounds from the king, and on another six thousand, with some grants of land ; but that he had never perverted justice for a bribe, nor set his interest to sale. Adverting to the other class of imputations thrown on him, as the uncontrolled director of public affairs, he declared that during the first two years of his majesty's reign, the period of his greatest influence, he

* Continuation, p. 867.

had communicated all his counsels to the other principal ministers of state: that, in succeeding years, his credit had gradually fallen so low, that his propositions were often rejected, and many measures undertaken against his advice, or even without his knowledge. He reminded them of his opposition to the war, which had involved the nation in so many calamities: and he observed, that if he had not resisted so many improper grants, and laboured to restrain so many excesses, he would not now have been surrounded by such an array of enemies. *

This address was communicated by the Lords to the Commons, and, from a wish, doubtless, to please the court, was declared by both houses to be an infamous libel, and condemned to be burnt by the hands of the hangman. His enemies would gladly have followed up this impotent revenge with an act of attainder, subjecting him to the penalties of treason for evading their jurisdiction: but they found it expedient to rest satisfied with an act, which for ever banished him from the British dominions, unless, before a limited day, he should appear to take his trial. †

Clarendon soon found that, by withdrawing from his enemies, he had not escaped the pursuit of mis- III treat-
ment in
France.

* Continuation, p. 871. Lives of the Lords Chancellor, Vol. I. p. 287.

† Continuation, p. 886.

fortune. The French government, being at that time desirous to enter into a close alliance with England, and understanding how obnoxious the Chancellor was both to the court and the people, resolved not to prejudice their interests by generosity to an exile ; and therefore dispatched a messenger after him to Rouen, with orders for his immediate departure from the dominions of France. Though exhausted by a journey in the depth of winter, and labouring under a severe attack of the gout, which had deprived him of the use of his limbs, he hastened to quit this inhospitable land, and directed his course towards Calais, in doubt whether a surrender into the hands of his enraged countrymen would not be preferable to a dependence on the precarious compassion of foreigners. But on his arrival at that town, his distempers had increased to such violence, that the physicians declared his removal could scarcely fail to be attended with immediate death.

While he lay extended in agony, the French messenger, who had accompanied him to Calais, appeared by his bedside, and informed him that he had received new orders from the king to insist on his instant departure from France. Clarendon, shocked at the inhumanity of such a message, exclaimed, " You must bring orders from God Almighty, as well as from your king, before I can obey. Your king," continued he, " is a very great

and powerful prince, yet not so omnipotent as to give a dying man strength to undertake a journey." He then sent for the magistrates and the lieutenant-governor of the town ; who, moved by the strange vicissitudes of his fortune, and blushing for the inhospitable policy of their government, united in a warm remonstrance to the court against the cruelty of his treatment. *

But the French court was already disposed, by other circumstances, to alter its conduct. The hopes of an alliance with England were now entirely dissipated, by the Triple League between England, Holland, and Sweden, concluded at the Hague by Sir William Temple : the English government was therefore to be mortified by caresses to the obnoxious exile. Clarendon now received letters full of kindness from the ministers of France ; and a special permission from the court to take up his abode in any quarter of its dominions. He accepted this tardy civility ; but his sufferings had not as yet reached their termination. As he travelled through Normandy, he accidentally met at Evreux with a company of English soldiers, who had entered the service of the French king. These men no sooner recognized the exiled minister, than, inflamed with the prejudices of their countrymen, they resolved to revenge their national grievances,

* Continuation, p. 892.

They forced their way into the inn where he lodged; wounded his attendants; and, after covering himself with bruises, were proceeding to put an end to his life, when he was rescued from their barbarous hands. *

Residence at
Montpelier.

After spending some time in different towns of France, he at length fixed his abode at Montpelier, where he experienced that distinguished reception which was due to his reputation and misfortunes. The society of some esteemed English friends, who had repaired thither for the benefit of the climate, gave an additional charm to the civilities of the inhabitants; and, after so many agitations, his mind began to partake of that cheerful tranquillity which had been diffused over it in the retirement of Jersey. He now resumed those literary labours which business, splendid but vexatious, had so long interrupted. He completed his *History of the Rebellion*; and drew up, for the benefit of his descendants, those memoirs of his private views and transactions which throw such important light on his character and his contemporaries. †

* Continuation, p. 900.

† Besides these well-known works, he left in manuscript a *Historical Account of the Troubles of Ireland during the English Civil Wars*. It was first published in 1721. He also wrote an *Answer to Hobbes's Leviathan*, with various religious tracts, which are printed in a folio volume. His printed works, including the *State Papers*, amount to more than eight volumes folio. The simplicity and

One poignant affliction yet awaited him. His favourite daughter, the Duchess of York, had been, like her husband, shaken in her attachment to the Protestant faith, and had privately embraced the Romish religion.* Clarendon, deeply wounded by this intelligence, wrote her a letter full of dignity and tenderness, entreating her to reconsider more maturely the fallacies by which she had been misled; and representing the reproach and ruin which her apostacy would bring on all her connections. At the same time he wrote to the Duke of York, who had not yet openly acknowledged himself a Catholic, warning him of the dangerous consequences to his interests, unless he could, by authority and persuasion, reclaim his wife from a superstition so odious in England.† These efforts were ineffectual; but the mortification which he experienced would have been alleviated could he have foreseen that, when this prince and his fami-

Apostacy of
his daughter.

candour of his narrative is more to be admired than either his manner or his reflections. He excels most in the delineation of characters, of which he is very fond; and his observations on the conduct of life are far more valuable than his political speculations. The tediousness of his perplexed and ill-assorted style is at times apt to overcome even the interest of the narrative. The most favourable specimen of his composition may be seen in the characters which he draws of Lord Digby, Sir John Berkley, and Sir Henry Bennet. These are inserted in the Supplement to the State Papers.

* Burnet, Vol. I. p. 333.

† Supplement, p. 37.

ly should be deprived of their throne for their adherence to the Romish religion, the posterity of his daughter should give two Protestant queens to the British empire.

Desire to
revisit Eng-
land.

Neither the society nor the beauties of Montpelier could efface from the mind of Clarendon a tender recollection of his native country. At length he quitted the south of France, and took up his residence at Rouen, as a nearer approach to the beloved shores of England. At the commencement of his exile, even his children had not been permitted to visit him ; and when this severe prohibition was withdrawn, he wrote to the king with the gratitude and humility of a mind softened and subdued by affliction. He added a petition to his expressions of thankfulness : “ If your majesty’s compassion towards an old man, who hath served the crown above thirty years, in some trust, and with some acceptance, will permit me to end my days, which cannot be many, in my own country, and in the company of my own children, I shall acknowledge it as a great mercy ; and do so entirely resign myself to your majesty’s pleasure, that I do assure your majesty, if the bill of banishment were by your grace repealed, I would sooner go into the Indies than into England, without your particular direction or licence.” *

* Supplement to State Papers, p. 40.

When seven years had passed over his head in ^{Death} exile, he again ventured to renew his fruitless supplications. He wrote to the king, to the queen, and to the Duke of York, humbly entreating a gracious permission to die in his own country. "Seven years was a time prescribed by God himself for the expiration of some of his greatest judgments; and it is full that time since I have, with all possible humility, sustained the insupportable weight of the king's displeasure: so that I cannot be blamed if I employ the short breath that is remaining in me, in all manner of supplications, which may contribute to the lessening this burthen that is so heavy upon me." The utmost of his wishes seemed no unsuitable boon to a man who had wasted his life in the service of his sovereign. "Since it will be in nobody's power," says he, "long to keep me from dying, methinks the desiring a place to die in should not be thought a great presumption; nor unreasonable for me to beg leave to die in my own country, and amongst my own children." * But to a prince without feelings of humanity or virtue such supplications were unavailing. A few months after writing these letters Clarendon paid the debt to nature, more exhausted by his misfortunes and premature infirmities than by length of years. He died at

* Supplement to State Papers, p. 45.

Rouen, on the seventh of December 1674, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

The close of Clarendon's life awakens a more tender regret, than if we had been led to contemplate his magnanimous deportment on the scaffold. Whether, indeed, we view the progress or the termination of his career, we discover more frequent occasion for compassion than for envy. Even in his highest exaltation he foresaw his fall; for his mind was fully impressed with the jealousy of courtiers, and the inconstancy of the public. His undeviating virtue, in a corrupt age, and amidst the temptations both of prosperity and misfortune, attracts our admiration more forcibly than either the reach of his talents, or the elevation of his views. His religion, as well as his policy, was clouded with prejudices; but while we lament a weakness inseparable from humanity, we honour the uncontaminated rectitude of his intentions. His chief failing seems to have been too entire devotion to a prince who did not deserve his generous attachment. Yet could he never subdue his mind to the pliant principles or supple manners of a court; and as he expressed his sentiments without regard to rank, he incurred the imputation of that haughtiness and uncomplying demeanour, which is so often united with the possession of power. The pride of office, however, seems little consistent with the soundness of his judgment; and, in that eventful

age, he could not look around him without seeing examples of the instability of greatness, which would chastise the most flattering suggestions of human presumption. In the meridian of his power, when he repaired to his country residence at Cornbury, the neighbouring nobility and gentry hastened to pay their obeisance to the favourite minister of their sovereign. Among others, it is said, Lenthal, the Speaker of the Long Parliament, and once, from his station, the most conspicuous man in the kingdom, came to visit the Chancellor. As he passed along the hall to the place where the minister stood, the company on either hand amused themselves with petulant jests on his altered condition, and humbled demeanour. Lenthal observed their countenances, and addressing himself with a smile to Clarendon, "These very gentlemen," said he, "who now come to pay their respects to your Lordship, have formerly done the same to me." *

* See Appendix, p. xv.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

[CHARACTERS, from Clarendon, of several of the Ministers, Parliamentary Speakers, and other public men mentioned in the text. The references subjoined to each character are to be understood of the early edition (1719) of Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, in three large octavos: where "Life" is prefixed, the reference is to the octavo edition of the "*Life and Continuation of Clarendon*," also in three large octavos.]

JOHN HAMPDEN.

HE was a gentleman of a good extraction, and a fair fortune, who, from a life of great pleasure and licence, had, on a sudden, retired to extraordinary sobriety and strictness, and yet retained his usual cheerfulness and affability, which, together with the opinion of his wisdom and justice, and the courage he had showed in opposing the ship-money, raised his reputation to a very great height, not only in Buckinghamshire, where he lived, but generally throughout the kingdom. He was not a man of many words, and rarely begun the discourse, or made the first entrance upon any business that was assumed; but a very weighty speaker; and after he had heard a full debate, and observed how the House was like to be inclined, took up the argument, and shortly, and clearly, and craftily so stated it, that he commonly conducted it to the conclusion he desired; and if he found he could

not do that, he was never without the dexterity to divert the debate to another time, and to prevent the determining any thing in the negative, which might prove inconvenient in the future. He made so great a show of civility, and modesty, and humility, and always of mistrusting his own judgment, and esteeming his with whom he conferred for the present, that he seemed to have no opinions or resolutions, but such as he contracted from the information and instruction he received upon the discourses of others, whom he had a wonderful art of governing, and leading into his principles and inclinations, whilst they believed that he wholly depended upon their counsel and advice. No man had ever a greater power over himself, or was less the man that he seemed to be, which shortly after appeared to every body, when he cared less to keep on the mask. He was of an industry and vigilance not to be tired out, or wearied by the most laborious ; and of parts not to be imposed upon, by the most subtle or sharp ; and of a personal courage equal to his best parts ; so that he was an enemy not to be wished, wherever he might have been made a friend, and as much to be apprehended where he was so, as any man could deserve to be. In a word, what was said of Cinna might well be applied to him : “ He had a head to contrive, a tongue to persuade, and a hand to execute any mischief.” He was killed in a skirmish in 1643. Vol. I. 185 ; II. 263.

JOHN PYM.

No man had more to answer for the miseries of the kingdom, or had his hand or head deeper in their contrivance ; and yet, I believe, they grew much higher even in his life than he designed. He was a man of a private quality and condition of life ; his education in the office of the exche-

quer, where he had been a clerk, and his parts rather acquired by industry than supplied by nature, or adorned by art. He had been well known in former parliaments, and was one of those few who had sat in many; the long intermission of parliaments having worn out most of those who had been acquainted with the rules and orders observed in those conventions. This gave him some reputation and reverence amongst those who were but now introduced. In the short parliament (April 1640) he spoke much, and appeared to be the most leading man; for, besides the exact knowledge of the former, and orders of that council, which few men had, he had a very comely and grave way of expressing himself, with great volubility of words, natural and proper; and understood the temper and affections of the kingdom as well as any man; and had observed the errors and mistakes in government, and knew well how to make them appear greater than they were. He died towards the end of December 1643. Vol. II. 462.

OLIVER ST JOHN, SOLICITOR-GENERAL.

HE was a lawyer of Lincoln's-Inn, known to be of parts and industry, but not taken notice of for practice in Westminster-Hall, till he argued at the Exchequer Chamber the case of ship-money, on the behalf of Mr Hampden, which gave him much reputation, and called him into all courts, and to all causes, where the King's prerogative was most contested. He was a man reserved, and of a dark and clouded countenance; very proud, and conversing with very few, and those men of his own humour and inclinations. He made good the confidence of his party, by not in the least degree abating his malignant spirit, or dissembling it; but with the same obstinacy opposed every thing which might

advance the King's service, when he was his solicitor, as ever he had done before. Vol. I. 186, 211.

He was made Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in the time of the Commonwealth. He died in 1673.

GEORGE LORD DIGBY, afterwards EARL of BRISTOL.

He was a man of very extraordinary parts by nature and art, and had surely as good and excellent an education as any man of that age in any country; a graceful and beautiful person, of great eloquence and becomingness in his discourse, (save that sometimes he seemed a little affected,) and of so universal a knowledge, that he never wanted subject for a discourse. He was equal to a very good part in the greatest affairs, but the unfittest man alive to conduct them, having an ambition and vanity superior to all his other parts, and a confidence in himself, which sometimes intoxicated, transported, and exposed him. He had, from his youth, by the disobligations his family had undergone from the Duke of Buckingham, and the great men who succeeded him, and some sharp reprehension himself had met with, which obliged him to a country life, contracted a prejudice and ill-will to the court; and so had, in the beginning of the parliament, engaged himself with that party which discovered most aversion to it, with a passion and animosity equal to theirs, and, therefore, very acceptable to them. But when he was weary of their violent counsels, and withdrew himself from them, with some circumstances which enough provoked them, and made a reconciliation and mutual confidence in each other for the future manifestly impossible among them, he made private and secret offers of his service to the King, to whom, in so general a defection of his servants, it could not but be very agreeable; and so his Majesty being satisfied, both in the discoveries he made of

what had passed, and in his professions for the future, removed him from the House of Commons, where he had rendered himself marvellously ungracious, and called him by writ to the House of Peers, where he did visibly advance the King's service. Vol. I. 343. He succeeded his father as Earl of Bristol, in 1653, and died in 1676. See the text, *Life of Clarendon*, Vol. II. p. 397.

WILLIAM LAUD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

HE was a man of great parts, and very exemplary virtues, alloyed and discredited by some unpopular natural infirmities; the greatest of which was, (besides a hasty sharp way of expressing himself,) that he believed innocence of heart, and integrity of manners, was a guard strong enough to secure any man in his voyage through this world, in what company soever he travelled, and through what ways soever he was to pass; and sure never any man was better supplied with that provision. He had great courage and resolution; and being most assured within himself, that he proposed no end in all his actions and designs, but what was pious and just, (as sure no man had ever a heart more entire to the King, the church, or his country,) he never studied the easiest ways to those ends; he thought, it may be, that any art or industry that way would discredit, at least make the integrity of the end suspected, let the cause be what it will. He did court persons too little; nor cared to make his designs and purposes appear as candid as they were, by showing them in any other dress than their own natural beauty, though perhaps in too rough a manner; and did not consider enough what men said, or were like to say of him. If faults and vices were fit to be looked into and discovered, let the persons be who they would that were guilty of them, they were sure to find no connivance or favour from him.

On the death of the Earl of Portland, (1634,) he was made one of the Commissioners of the Treasury and Revenue, which he had reason to be sorry for, because it engaged him in civil business and matters of state, wherein he had little experience, and which he had hitherto avoided.

He defended himself (on his trial) with great and undaunted courage, and less passion than was expected from his constitution, answered all their objections with clearness and irresistible reason, and convinced all impartial men of his integrity, and his detestation of all treasonable intentions. So that, though few excellent men have ever had fewer friends to their persons, yet all reasonable men absolved him from any foul crime that the law could take notice of and punish.

He underwent his execution (10th January 1645) with all Christian courage and magnanimity, to the admiration of the beholders and confusion of his enemies. Vol. I. 90; II. 572.

SIR JOHN COLEPEPPER, CHANCELLOR of the
EXCHEQUER.

He had spent some years of his youth in foreign parts, and especially in armies, where he had seen good service, and very well observed it. He was proud and ambitious, and very much disposed to improve his fortune, which he knew well how to do by industry and thrift, without stooping to any corrupt ways, to which he was not inclined. He did not love the persons of many of those who were the violent managers, (oppositionists,) and less their designs; and, therefore, he no sooner knew that he was well spoken of at court, but he exposed himself to the invitation, and heartily embraced that interest. He had a wonderful insinuation and address into the acceptance and confidence of the King and

Queen, and was not suspected of flattery, when no man more complied with those infirmities they both had ; and by that compliance, prevailed often over them.

He was generally esteemed as a good speaker, being a man of an universal understanding, a quick comprehension, a wonderful memory, who commonly spoke at the end of the debate ; when he would recollect all that had been said of weight on all sides with great exactness, and express his own sense with much clearness, and such an application to the House, that no man more gathered a general concurrence to his opinion than he, which was the more notable, because his person and manner of speaking were ungracious enough, so that he prevailed only by the strength of his reason, which was enforced with sufficient confidence. He died in 1660. Vol. I. 340 ; Life, I. 93.

LUCIUS CAREY, second VISCOUNT FALKLAND ; SECRETARY of STATE, killed at the Battle of Newbury, in 1648.

IF the celebrating the memory of eminent and extraordinary persons, and transmitting their great virtues for the imitation of posterity, be one of the principal ends and duties of history, it will not be thought impertinent, in this place, to remember a loss which no time will suffer to be forgotten, and no success of good fortune could repair. In this unhappy battle was slain the Lord Viscount Falkland ; a person of such prodigious parts of learning and knowledge, of that inimitable sweetness and delight in conversation, of so flowing and obliging a humanity and goodness to mankind, and of that primitive simplicity and integrity of life, that if there were no other brand upon this odious and accursed civil war than that single loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity.

Turpe mori, post te, solo non posse dolore.

He was wonderfully beloved by all who knew him, as a man of excellent parts, of a wit so sharp, and a nature so sincere, that nothing could be more lovely.

His house (at Tew) being within little more than ten miles of Oxford, he contracted familiarity and friendship with the most polite and accurate men of that university; who found such an immenseness of wit, and such a solidity of judgment in him, so infinite a fancy, bound in by a most logical ratiocination; such a vast knowledge, that he was not ignorant in any thing; yet such an excessive humility, as if he had known nothing, that they frequently resorted and dwelt with him, as in a college situated in a purer air; so that his house was a university in a less volume, whither they came not so much for repose as study, and to examine and refine those grosser propositions, which laziness and consent made current in vulgar conversation.

He was superior to all those passions and affections which attend vulgar minds, and was guilty of no other ambition than of knowledge, and to be reputed a lover of all good men; and that made him too much a contemner of those arts, which must be indulged in the transactions of human affairs.

Thus fell that incomparable young man, in the four and thirtieth year of his age, having so much dispatched the true business of life, that the oldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocence: whosoever leads such a life, needs be the less anxious upon how short warning it is taken from him.

His stature was low, and smaller than most men's; his motion not graceful; and his aspect so far from inviting, that it had somewhat in it of simplicity; and his voice the worst of the three, and so untuned, that, instead of recon-

cing, it offended the ear; but that little person, and small stature, was quickly found to contain a great heart, a courage so keen, and a nature so fearless, that no composition of the strongest limbs ever disposed any man to greater enterprise; and that untuned tongue and voice easily discovered itself to be supplied and governed by a mind and understanding so excellent, that the wit and weight of all he said carried greater lustre with it than any ornament of delivery could ensure. Vol. I. 340. II. 350. Life, I. 39.

SIR FRANCIS COTTINGTON, created LORD COTTINGTON; CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.

HE was a very wise man, by the great and long experience he had in business of all kinds; and by his natural temper, which was not liable to any transport of anger, or any other passion, but could bear contradiction, and even reproach, without being moved, or put out of his way: for he was very steady in pursuing what he proposed to himself, and had a courage not to be frightened with any opposition. It is true he was illiterate as to the grammar of any language, or the principles of any science, but by his perfectly understanding the Spanish, (which he spoke as a Spaniard,) the French, and Italian languages, and having read very much in all, he could not be said to be ignorant in any part of learning, divinity only excepted.

He was of an excellent humour, and very easy to live with; and under a grave countenance, covered the most of mirth, and caused more than any man of the most pleasant disposition. He never used any body ill, but used many very well for whom he had no regard: his greatest fault was, that he could dissemble, and make men believe that he loved them very well, when he cared not for them. He had no

very tender affections, nor bowels apt to yearn at all objects which deserved compassion. He was heartily weary of the world, and no man was more willing to die; which is an argument that he had peace of conscience. He left behind him a greater esteem of his parts than love to his person. He died in 1651. Vol. I. 151. III. 382.

OLIVER CROMWELL.

HE was one of those men, *quos vituperare ne inimici quidem possunt, nisi ut simul laudent*; whom his very enemies could not condemn without commending him at the same time; for he could never have done half that mischief without great parts of courage, industry, and judgment. He must have had a wonderful understanding in the natures and humours of men, and as great a dexterity in applying them; who, from a private and obscure birth, (though of a good family,) without interest or estate, alliance or friendship, could raise himself to such a height, and compound and knead such opposite and contradictory tempers, humours, and interests into a consistence, that contributed to his designs, and to their own destruction; whilst himself grew insensibly powerful enough to cut off those by whom he had climbed, in the instant that they projected to demolish their own building. What was said of Cinna may very justly be said of him, *Ausum eum quæ nemo auderet bonus; perfecisse, quæ a nullo, nisi fortissimo, perfici possent*. He attempted those things which no good man durst have ventured on; and achieved those in which none but a valiant and great man could have succeeded. Without doubt, no man with more wickedness ever attempted any thing, or brought to pass what he desired more wickedly, more in the face and contempt of religion and moral honesty; yet wick-

edness as great as his could never have accomplished those designs, without the assistance of a great spirit, an admirable circumspection and sagacity, and a most magnanimous resolution.

When he appeared first in the parliament, he seemed to have a person in no degree gracious, no ornament of discourse, none of those talents which use to conciliate the affections of the stander by: yet, as he grew into place and authority, his parts seemed to be raised, as if he had had concealed faculties, till he had occasion to use them: and when he was to act the part of a great man, he did it without any indecency, notwithstanding the want of custom.

After he was confirmed and invested Protector, he consulted with very few upon any action of importance, nor communicated any enterprise he resolved upon, with more than those who were to have principal parts in the execution of it; nor with them sooner than was absolutely necessary. What he once resolved, in which he was not rash, he would not be dissuaded from, nor endure any contradiction of his power and authority.

Cromwell was not so far a man of blood as to follow Machiavel's method; which prescribes, upon a total alteration of government, as a thing absolutely necessary, to cut off all the heads of those, and extirpate their families, who are friends to the old one. It was confidently reported, that, in the council of officers, it was more than once proposed, "That there might be a general massacre of all the royal party, as the only expedient to secure the government," but that Cromwell would never consent to, it may be, out of too great a contempt of his enemies. In a word, as he was guilty of many crimes against which damnation is denounced, and for which hell fire is prepared, so he had some good qualities which have caused the memory of some men in all ages to be celebrated; and he will be looked upon by pos-

terity as a brave wicked man. He died 3d September 1658. Vol. III. 648.

SIR HENRY VANE, the Younger.

HE had an unusual aspect, which, though it might naturally proceed both from his father and mother, neither of which were beautiful persons, yet made men think there was something in him extraordinary; and his whole life made good that imagination.

He was indeed a man of extraordinary parts, a pleasant wit, a great understanding, which pierced into and discerned the purposes of other men with wonderful sagacity, whilst he had himself *vultum clausum*, that no man could make a guess of what he intended. He was of a temper not to be moved, of a rare dissimulation, and could comply when it was not seasonable to contradict, without losing ground by the condescension; and if he were not superior to Mr Hampden, he was inferior to no other man in all mysterious artifices. He was executed for high treason in 1662. Vol. I. 186. II. 379.

THOMAS WRIOTHESLEY, fourth EARL of SOUTHAMPTON; LORD TREASURER after the Restoration.

HE was indeed a great man in all respects, and brought very much reputation to the King's cause. He had great dislike of the high courses which had been taken in the government, and a particular prejudice to the Earl of Strafford, for some exorbitant proceedings. But as soon as he saw the ways of reverence and duty towards the King declined, and the prosecution of the Earl of Strafford to exceed the limits

of justice, he opposed them vigorously in all their proceedings. He was a man of great sharpness of judgment, a very quick apprehension, and that readiness of expression upon any sudden debate, that no man delivered himself more advantageously and weightily, and more efficaciously with the hearers; so that no man gave them more trouble in his opposition, or drew so many to a concurrence with him in opinion. He had no relation to, or dependence upon, the court, or purpose to have any, but wholly pursued the public interest.

He was not only an exact observer of justice, but so clear-sighted a discerner of all the circumstances which might disguise it, that no false or fraudulent colour could impose upon him; and of so sincere and impartial a judgment, that no prejudice to the person of any man made him less awake to his cause; but believed that there is *aliquid et in hostem nefas*, and that a very ill man might be very unjustly dealt with. On the happy return of his Majesty, he seemed to recover great vigour of mind, and undertook the charge of High Treasurer with much alacrity and industry, as long as he had any hope to get a revenue settled proportionable to the expence of the crown, (towards which his interest, and authority, and counsel, contributed very much,) or to reduce the expence of the court within the limits of the revenue. His person was of a small stature; his courage, as all his other faculties, very great; having no sign of fear, or sense of danger, when he was in a place where he ought to be found. He died in 1667. Vol. II. 200, Life, III. 781.

LENTHAL

Is represented by Clarendon as a very unfit man for the place of Speaker; but he was deficient neither in good

sense or presence of mind, if we may judge from the following anecdote: When the King went into the House of Commons (1642) to demand the five members, he asked the Speaker, who stood below, whether any of them were in the house? The Speaker, falling on his knee, prudently replied, "I have, Sir, neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak, in this place, but as the house is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am; and I humbly ask pardon, that I cannot give any other answer to what your Majesty is pleased to demand of me."—*Hume*.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.









